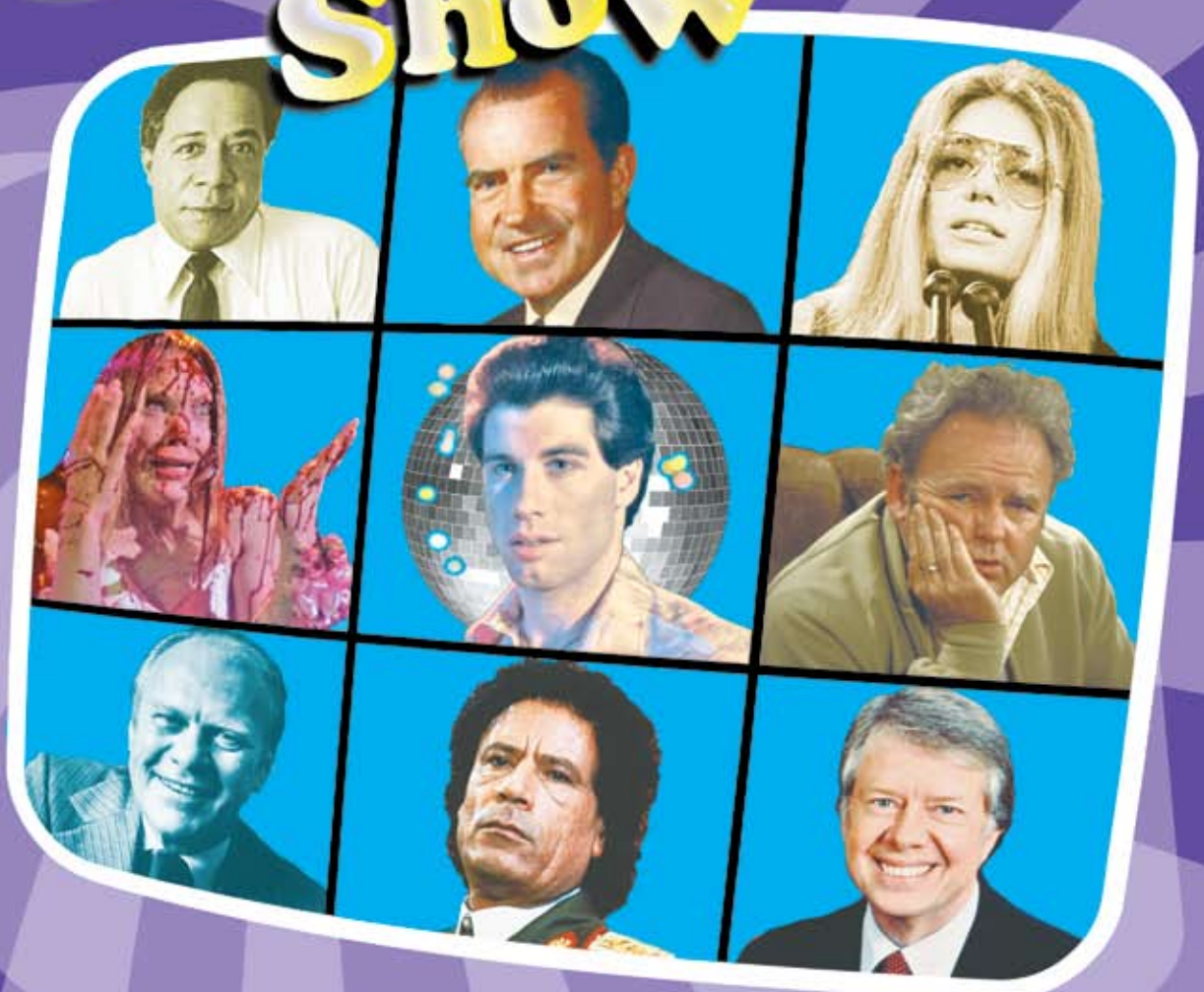
THE GOP EMBRACES EXTREMISM • THE EDITORS

THE Nation.

That Seventies Show



NOVEMBER 8, 2010
TheNation.com

by Rick Perlstein

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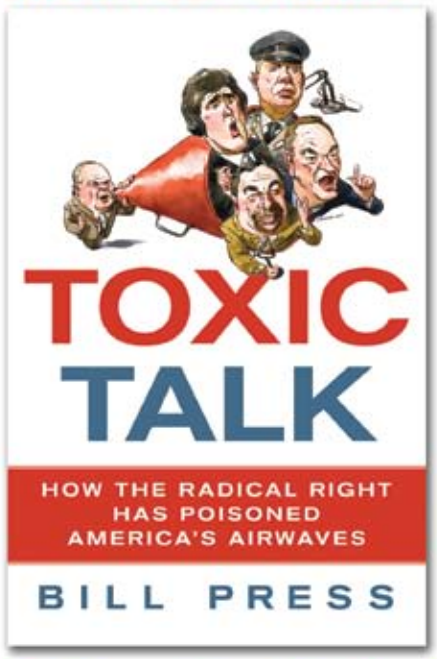
"THE BOOK MICHAEL SAVAGE DOESN'T WANT YOU TO READ!"



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Letters

Name Your Prog Prince (-cess)!

*Peter Dreier's "The Fifty Most Influential Progressives of the Twentieth Century" [Oct. 4] drew a tremendous response. We received close to 1,000 nominations from readers, naming their favorites who hadn't made the cut. Howard Zinn, Noam Chomsky and Dorothy Day were top picks; other choices may surprise you. Read the full "*Nation *Readers' Top Ten List," which Dreier has annotated with profiles highlighting their invaluable contributions, at thenation.com/community. Help us start a new list for the twenty-first century.*

Holliston, Mass.
As a history teacher, I found Peter Dreier's list fabulous! So many radical men and women made a more democratic America. They showed "true grit," love of our country and their belief in economic and social justice. All were considered radical or dangerous in their day, and yet we easily accept their views now. A great list.
Tina Leardi

Newton, Mass.
I scanned your pages for the name of Howard Zinn and was astonished that it was not included. His *People's History* brought new insights to countless students and workers; he was a civil rights and antiwar activist; his "war is never justified" message still resonates; he was an ally of the Berrigans, Daniel Ellsberg, workers, organizers and prisoners. I imagined his response: such lists are foolish and, worse, a distraction. *The Nation*'s descent to a "top ten" list may be au courant, but it's discouraging.
Jim Miller

Ludlow, Mass.
Your list was a great learning experience. There were many names I was not aware of and enjoyed finding out about. As an educator, I found it rewarding: there are so many true heroes for students to learn about. One person I think warrants consideration is Howard Zinn, a man who changed how we teach history: hero worship is out; everyday people are in.
Kevin M. Brown

Royal Oak, Mich.
You made glancing references to Howard Zinn and Studs Terkel but left them off your list. You may have thought them not influential enough, but the FBI felt otherwise. I propose a rule of thumb here: anybody rated high on the FBI list should probably show up on your list. They've more than paid their dues. That having been said, your list is very, very good.
Catherine Sheap

San Francisco
Your list would have neared perfection with the remarkable Fannie Lou Hamer (1917–77) on it. As a female African-American sharecropper in the most brutally Jim Crow state, Mississippi, she faced obstacles arguably greater than all on your list. In addition to her courageous voting rights activism, Hamer served notably in the women's rights, economic justice and antiwar movements. Her many achievements were accomplished in a short lifetime and despite suffering disabilities from a 1963 beating by Mississippi police.
Howard Williams

New York City
Leaving Noam Chomsky off the list is analogous to leaving Michael Jordan off a list of The Fifty Best Basketball Players of the Century. No human being has contributed more to progressive discourse, or fought more for human rights here and around the world, than Chomsky.
David Scott Maynard

Atlanta
Imagine my dismay when I found that what purported to be a serious consideration of twentieth-century activists rendered black women nearly invisible. Am I to believe that Dorothy Height, Fannie Lou Hamer, Coretta Scott King, Rosa Parks, Johnnetta Cole and Bernice Johnson Reagon are not any part of this discussion?
Mark A. Sanders

letters@thenation.com

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The Extremist GOP

In 2005, as George W. Bush began his second term and right-wing Republicans organized the House and Senate, most progressives thought the Grand Old Party was as right-wing as it could get. Even so, Florida's Charlie Crist, Alaska's Lisa Murkowski and Rhode Island's Lincoln Chafee remained Republicans in good standing. This year, all three are running insurgent independent campaigns against a GOP that has folded Ronald Reagan's "big tent." The fact that these three celebrants at Bush's Republican Party are no longer welcome is stark evidence of the most dramatic development of this midterm election season.

EDITORIAL

The GOP's lurch toward extremism extends far beyond the ideological cleansing of moderate RINOs, "Republicans in Name Only." Ideas once considered beyond the fringe could have high-profile champions in the next Congress, and absurd premises and proposals are likely to have their own caucuses. The vast majority of the GOP Senate candidates, for example, reject the overwhelming scientific consensus on the human causes of climate change. Joe Miller, running strong for an Alaska Senate seat against Murkowski, supports repeal of the Seventeenth Amendment, which provides for the direct election of senators; wants to privatize Social Security; and is against abortion even in cases of rape or incest. Both Miller and Sharron Angle, who is in a tight race to take majority leader Harry Reid's Senate seat, want to eliminate the Education Department. And Angle, like Delaware long shot Christine O'Donnell, seems unaware that the Constitution requires the separation of church and state.

Broadening the debate is fine. But when one party pulls that debate toward extremes that even its most radical leaders have recently rejected, the prospect of political dysfunction, if not explosion, grows exponentially. And Republican leaders, with the party's free-spending corporate underwriters, have supplied the dynamite. After working behind the scenes for months to prevent the nomination of Senate candidate Rand Paul of Kentucky, and after the extremism of Paul's antigovernment positions was revealed (including skepticism about the 1964 Civil Rights Act), Senate minority leader Mitch McConnell now says he consults several times each week with the candidate to assure a Paul victory. So it goes, in race after race, as top Republicans and their allies provide partisan, ideological and financial cover for candidates they once dismissed as unqualified, unsavory or unconscionable.

Whether or not voters like it—and polls suggest most do not—America is saddled with a two-party system. Historically, this has required both parties to keep the middle ground in sight. Some of the earliest critics of McCarthyism in the 1950s were Senator Joe McCarthy's fellow Republicans; and when the John Birch Society made its move within the GOP in the early 1960s, rebukes came not just from mainstream party leaders like Richard Nixon and George Romney but from conservative icons Russell Kirk and William F. Buckley.

No more. In 2010 Republican leaders have abandoned even mainstream conservatives like Murkowski while welcoming the wrecking crew. Their money, and the money of independent "angels" like the Karl Rove–guided Crossroads GPS, the Chamber of Commerce and the billionaire Koch brothers, may buy victories on November 2. No matter what the final tabulation, however, President Obama and Congressional Democrats should make it clear that there will be no compromise with extremism. It must be challenged and defeated.

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Down-Ballot Power

Four years ago Mark Ritchie wound up a quarter-century career as a farm and food policy activist and waded into the political fray. As a key organizer of the international fair-trade movement and a savvy legislative strategist, he might have been expected to run for Congress. Instead, he ran for Minnesota secretary of state.

COMMENT

Furious at the mangled recount of the Ohio presidential vote in 2004, Ritchie determined that nothing was more important than putting honest players in charge of running elections and counting votes. "All our talk about defending democracy adds up to very little if we aren't willing to run for and win the positions that make the promise of democracy real," he says. Two years after his election, Ritchie was in the thick of the ugliest recount fight of the 2008 election cycle, bringing what the Minnesota Supreme Court would hail as a thoroughly "fair and conscientious" approach to the seven-month review that made Al Franken's vote the sixtieth Democratic one in the Senate.

Ritchie, who is running for re-election this year, is the poster boy for an emerging understanding on the part of progressives that "down-ballot" victories are crucial. Once in office progressives in low-profile but powerful statewide legislative posts can play a definitional role in our politics by keeping elections for state and federal posts honest and fair; by working with policymakers in Washington to implement healthcare, education and job-creation programs; and by providing models for how other states and the federal government can get social and economic policies right. Although most pundits can't be bothered to talk about much more than the president and Congress, and most money flows to federal races, contests for state posts have always been essential. That goes double this year, when states are choosing the officials who will draw Congressional district lines nationwide.

The looming redistricting battles of 2011—when governors and other state officials and legislators will, in effect, allocate House seats in Washington—mean that the November 2 election could set the tone for federal politics for the next decade. For national Democrats, winning a big-state governorship—in California, Texas, Florida, Georgia or Ohio—could matter more than winning a Senate seat. And with eighty-seven state legislative chambers up for grabs (forty-five statehouses, forty-two state senates), there are thousands of local races that have national importance.

Unfortunately for the Democrats, who have dominated statehouse politics since 2006 (they currently control the lower houses of thirty-two legislatures, compared with sixteen for the Republicans, with one tied and one, Nebraska, nonpartisan), the party's troubles at the national level extend to the states. "The Democrats control a majority of the governors' offices and state senates and houses at a time when a severe national recession and state fiscal crises are pushing voters into an angry, anti-incumbent mood," explains *Governing* magazine analyst Louis Jacobson. "Polls typically show Republicans and

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Noted.

DOUBTING THOMAS: Why now? What, after almost twenty years, prompted **Virginia Thomas**, wife of Supreme Court Justice **Clarence Thomas**, to leave a message on Brandeis professor **Anita Hill**'s office voicemail asking her to apologize for accusing Justice Thomas of sexual harassment during his 1991 confirmation hearings?

The timing was interesting. Ginni Thomas placed her call to Hill the morning after the *New York Times* reported that Virginia Thomas's new **Liberty Central** organization accepted "large, unidentified contributions" totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars. Those untraceable dollars came in the flood of right-wing funding following the **Citizens United** campaign finance decision, in which Justice Thomas voted with the majority. The *Times* reported that a wide range of legal ethicists said Liberty Central's financing raises "knotty questions" about a conflict of interest for Justice Thomas.

Did this accusation heat up the rankling sense of persecution both Thomases feel about Hill's old charge? To understand the connection between these two episodes it's necessary to scrape away some of the mythology that has grown up around Thomas's confirmation. The issue in 1991 wasn't just the vicious and crude sexual bullying Hill ascribed to Thomas, who had been her boss in the Reagan administration's Education Department and later at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The issue was perjury: was he lying under oath?

It is now nearly forgotten that Thomas's ethics record gave Hill's accusation traction. Briefly a federal appeals judge, and before that a Reagan operative charged with undercutting civil rights enforcement, Thomas had a long habit of telling untruthful stories. As the late civil rights scholar **Haywood Burns**, dean of the law school at City University of New York, testified during the '91 hearings before Hill's accusations surfaced, Thomas's testimony and record were marked by "a lack of candor, compassion and ethical judgment."

Reporting to Congress as head of the EEOC, Thomas misrepresented his agency's nonenforcement of age discrimination law. As a federal judge he sat on an appeals court review of the criminal conviction of Col. **Oliver North**, despite having spoken out in support of North's actions in the Iran/Contra scandal. He failed to recuse himself from a case involving his political patron, Senator **John Danforth**.

To score points, Thomas even lied about his sister: falsely describing her in speeches as pathetically welfare dependent, a mocking depiction utterly at odds with the proud and hard existence of a woman who worked a series of minimum-wage jobs for most of her life to support her family.

Perhaps Ginni Thomas's phone call was a smoke screen—an attempted distraction from the reporting on Liberty Central's funding. Maybe it was unrelated. Either way, twenty years later it bears remembering that Hill's accusations were not just a matter of "she said, he said." Hill, in 1991, testified as a credible witness of unquestioned probity. Thomas had a documented ethics problem then—and, it appears, an ongoing ethics problem now. Back then, Thomas's truth problem obscured his shameful role in undoing the very civil rights tradition that made his nomination possible. Today, the Thomases' evocation of that old episode obscures an ethically challenged Supreme Court justice complicit in handing American politics over to corporations and anonymous far-right donors—that is the real scandal.

BRUCE SHAPIRO

RAÚL ON THE ROPES: When Arizona's legislature and governor embraced crudely anti-immigrant politics—with a "show us your papers" law that targets ethnic and racial minorities—Arizona Congressman **Raúl Grijalva** did not take the easy route of meek objection. He supported legal challenges to the law, but he also went to the streets as a noisy and unapologetic critic of what he described in a letter to President Obama as "a dangerous and mean spirited law that improperly imposes state law upon Federal prerogatives." Grijalva spoke at rallies, marched with immigrants and told Obama, "I call on your leadership to challenge, in any way possible, this unconstitutional and discriminatory law. I urge you to make clear that the Federal Government will not participate in any way in the enforcement of this law or cooperate with the state of Arizona in its implementation and execution."

But courage can be costly. Grijalva's Republican challenger, **Ruth McClung**, has used the immigration issue to raise major "moneybomb" support from anti-immigrant activists nationwide. The **National Republican Congressional Committee** has swooped in to support her. But Grijalva is getting a strong push from **Progressive Democrats of America** and unions that are organizing bilingual get-out-the-vote campaigns. He has developed smart messages about shared concerns like the threat to Social Security and other popular programs, while also running as a progressive who is not afraid to speak up for civil rights and civil liberties.

JOHN NICHOLS

MURDOCH'S CHALLENGE: In the next few weeks, Britain's secretary of state for business, **Vince Cable**, will make a decision that will influence the nation's media landscape for years to come. Should **Rupert Murdoch**'s **News Corp** be allowed to buy the remaining 61 percent share of **BSkyB**, the cable television company that controls more than three-fifths of all residential cable subscriptions in the country?

In an unprecedented move, a coalition of news organizations, including the **BBC**, the **Daily Mail** and the **Guardian**, drafted a letter outlining their fears of a decline in accountability and a lack of media pluralism. British tabloids and liberal broadsheets are normally archenemies, but unusual compromises are being made as Murdoch seeks further reach in broadcasting—in addition to the 37 percent of newspaper readership he already commands. Even **Martin Wolf** of the conservative *Financial Times* is opposed, stating that Murdoch's "mixture of popular entertainment with right-wing populism has proved extraordinarily successful. But it has also helped destroy the middle-ground in American politics."

The BBC will suffer budget cuts as part of the government's austerity agenda, and smaller organizations are hemorrhaging money as the appetite for print journalism declines. The last thing Britain needs under weakened media is a homegrown **Fox News**.

JENNIFER O'MAHONY

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Republican-leaning voters more energized to vote than their Democratic counterparts, undercutting Democratic hopes in almost every state."

Although some setbacks are likely, Democratic statehouse advantages hold out the prospect that the parties could come out of this election closely balanced in most states. Then, while party labels will still matter, the integrity of individual officeholders will be even more critical. That's why the good news from this tough election cycle is that many new-generation progressive legislators, such as Maryland State Senator Jamie Raskin, are poised to win new terms. Raskin, who represents Maryland's 20th Senate district, promises to "counter the baffling activities of the Tea Party" with the progressive politics of "the District Twen-Tea Party." That's not just a fun turn of phrase; Raskin is pointing out another reason down-ballot races matter this year. If Washington gets even more bogged down by partisan wrangling after November 2—and especially if the White House opts for compromise with resurgent Republicans—state-based progressives will be essential players on issues ranging from clean elections to climate change to regulating corporate abuses to implementing healthcare reform.

Vermont might elect its first Democratic governor since 2002, Peter Shumlin, the State Senate president pro tem, who is campaigning as a backer of bold single-payer reforms. Healthcare is an issue as well in contests for state attorney general posts, thirty of which will be filled this year. Led by Florida's Bill McCollum, Republican attorneys general joined a lawsuit seeking to overturn key components of federal reform legislation. But McCollum, who lost a gubernatorial primary, might be replaced by progressive legislator Dan Gelber, once labeled by the *Wall Street Journal* as "Jeb Bush's chief nemesis." Democratic candidates like California's Kamala Harris, New York's Eric Schneiderman and Colorado's Stan Garnett are ready to join incumbent attorneys general like Nevada's Catherine Cortez Masto and Minnesota's Lori Swanson on the right side of the healthcare debate and national fights for corporate accountability.

The same goes for impressive newcomers in other down-ballot races, such as Rhode Island general treasurer candidate Gina Raimondo, who wants to "exert the state's leverage as a major shareholder to address corporate misbehavior"; New Mexico public lands commissioner candidate Ray Powell, who promises to renew a tradition of "holding individuals and global companies accountable to take care of the land and to pay what they owe"; and Iowa secretary of agriculture candidate Francis Thicke, who has outlined an ambitious plan to battle agribusiness giants while making the state a leader in promoting sustainability, food safety and renewable energy.

As it was in 1932, when Justice Louis Brandeis referred to them as "laboratories of democracy," states are still producing the most innovative and progressive ideas. And as long as progressive reformers—like Wayne State University law professor Jocelyn Benson, a national advocate on election issues, and Arizona legislator Chris Deschene, a member of the Navajo Nation who made a name for himself battling the disenfranchisement of rural voters—keep entering and winning races for secretary of state, Mark Ritchie will be proven right when he says, "No matter what happens in Washington, we can make sure that democracy starts in the states." JOHN NICHOLS

Calvin Trillin, Deadline Poet

Times Says CREEP-like Cash Has Returned

Unlabeled cash, accepted with a wink,
Is what sent Nixon's men off to the clink.
But now that air of criminal intrigue'll
Be missing, since such secret bribes are legal.

Foreclosure Fraud Fallout

A year and a half ago, I sat in the office of Jim Kowalski, a prosecutor turned defense attorney in Jacksonville, Florida, listening to him describe a crime that was, by then, known to anyone who'd dealt with the foreclosure process. Kowalski worked with a small cadre of local attorneys trying to slow the area's onslaught of foreclosures.

COMMENT

In the aggregate, they were monstrously outmatched by banks with subcontractors of subcontractors dedicated to removing families from homes quickly. But on a case-by-case basis, they stole the advantage because they knew the mortgage industry's secret: it had buckled under the weight of its own corruption. All you had to do was force the banks' empty hand, and you could keep a client in her home.

The biggest tell came over listservs that connected legal aid outfits and small private practices overwhelmed by the sudden demand for foreclosure defenses. As lawyers like Kowalski compared notes on the three big banks whose servicing arms controlled nearly half the mortgage market, they noticed case after case of irregularities. Once they forced the servicers into court, the pattern became clear: everybody involved in the securities process had cut so many corners in pursuit of record profits, had operated with such disregard for the many steps that ensure a safe and sound mortgage market, that they couldn't even show who owned the debt.

In April 2008 Kowalski deposed a Citibank residential lending employee, Tamara Price, whose name had recurred on foreclosures. Price described a system for creating bogus mortgage assignments that was baldly deceptive, all the way down to the fake "vice president" title with which Price signed her name. The case was exceptional only in that Price was on record. Already, scattered judges had reached their wits' end with the legal corner-cutting and were throwing out fore-

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closures. Lawyers in the trenches clung hopefully to the trend; most national advocates quietly said it would never prompt the sort of federal leadership that the foreclosure crisis demands. More than two years and millions of foreclosures later, a deposition similar to Price's—from a GMAC employee who admits to "robo-signing" 10,000 sworn documents a month—has revealed the fraud to the whole country.

Federal law enforcement officials have launched an investigation that could lead to a Justice Department suit, though both the probe and the potential suit will certainly be lengthy. In the meantime, some investors in mortgage-backed securities are making noise about wanting their money back, a disaster the banks have clearly feared from the start of this crisis. The banks, for their part, insist that the robo-signing scandal is just a matter of bad paperwork.

And the defrauded homeowners? They go right on facing foreclosure—at least those who still have homes. The same political advisers who guided Barack Obama into claiming, as a candidate, that he'd freeze foreclosures now fret about "moral hazard" and the systemic threat that protecting borrowers would create. They insist that we accept the fantasy of a mortgage and banking industry in need of tweaks, rather than confront the grotesque beast that ate millions of American dreams before devouring itself.

Obama's arguments might be more convincing if the robo-signing fraud was exceptional. But it's just the latest dirty open secret to make headlines. In the past three years, we've learned that originators, desperate for more loans to feed banks, steered borrowers to the no-doc, low-doc and other subprime loans that were required to keep the securities game going. We learned that those originators targeted seniors and people of color—or, in the parlance common at Wells Fargo, "mud people"—because they were the easiest to exploit. We learned that the Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS) found widespread lending fraud and malpractice at one of the largest subprime lenders, Washington Mutual, year after year for five years—and did nothing. Worse, OTS blocked other regulators who wanted to act. And we learned that credit-rating agencies inflated ratings of plainly shoddy loans. All this and more was required to fuel the securities trade that made a very few people very rich.

A number of big banks have voluntarily suspended foreclosures while they no doubt scramble to falsify more documents. It's not the first voluntary foreclosure freeze. We last saw such charity when President Obama began crafting his foreclosure policy in early 2009. When it became clear that his policy would be toothless, the foreclosures resumed. Since then, the administration's audits have confirmed the program's widely predicted failure. A solution based on the industry's good will couldn't work then, and it won't work now. Bank of America announced recently that it will resume business as usual in the twenty-three states where foreclosures require a judge's approval. The bank insists that during its ten-day freeze it managed to review its foreclosure process in the relevant states and found nothing that demanded a pause. Just a few papers out of order is all.

Meanwhile, the president has thus far made it clear he will do nothing to force the banks' hand. He has said there will be no foreclosure freeze, and his foreclosure prevention program still contains no cudgel to force meaningful rewrites of plainly bad loans. The federal probe into banks' criminal behavior is welcome news, but millions of homeowners are fighting desperate battles right now and getting no real help from the White House or Congress, which has refused to pass the bankruptcy reform that would, finally, give borrowers the power to demand a fair deal. The president and his advisers tell us instead that holding banks accountable while helping families who are drowning in fraudulent debt is too dangerous for the housing market.

This position does not differ substantively from that of George W. Bush. Given what we've learned lately, it's even less defensible. Mortgage servicers have shown that they have neither the will nor the ability to fix millions of bad loans. But until those loans are dealt with, there will be no housing recovery, any more than the broader economy will revive without job creation. The situation clearly demands that the government step in and lead. There is sadly not much more than that to add to the foreclosure debate; the solutions have long been clear. As long as banks are left to write their own rules, they will go on flouting law and decency. And as long as President Obama allows them to do so, he's a willful participant in their ongoing scam. KAI WRIGHT

Kai Wright (kaiwright.com), the Alfred Knobler Journalism Fellow at The Nation Institute, is the editorial director of ColorLines.

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Christine O'Donnell has come under fire for reportedly embellishing her résumé. But the real story of her time at the Claremont Institute is the virulent antigay politics she would have learned there, writes Kathryn Joyce in **At Claremont Institute, Christine O'Donnell Was Taught ABCs of Homophobia**.

In **Corporations Hide Election Spending From the Public Eye,** New York City public advocate Bill de Blasio and Los Angeles controller Wendy Greuel report that to take advantage of *Citizens United* while shielding themselves from accountability, corporate interests have begun steering election funding through nonprofits and trade associations.

Watch a **video trailer** for Ari Berman's new book, *Herding Donkeys*, which tells the story of the grassroots movement that propelled Obama to the White House—and the shape that movement is in today.

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Eric Alterman

West Bank Stories

Of the many baffling tactical decisions the Obama administration has made during its first two years, the one I find most difficult to understand has been the intensity with which it has pursued peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians. Obama has paid an enormous price among the professional Jewish community, donors and the neocon-dominated punditocracy merely for attempting to insist that Israel keep the promises it has already made to freeze settlement expansion, and for what? Given the weakness of moderates on both sides, the strength and audacity of both sides' violent extremes, the kinds of painful compromises that would be necessary for a successful conclusion to the current talks appear less likely than the coming of the Messiah.

Sadly, Israel's repugnant foreign minister, Avigdor Lieberman, has a point when he imagines a lasting peace to be "decades" away. Obviously a big part of the problem is the increase in influence of violent Islamic extremism, as evidenced by the growing power of Hamas in the West Bank and Gaza. (The Palestinian Authority does not dare allow another election in light of this.) Pragmatically speaking, peace is impossible without Hamas, but given the never-ending avalanche of hate-filled rhetoric from its leadership, it's hard to see how peace is possible with Hamas either. On the Israeli side, the problem is the ideologically minded settlers and their supporters, who are certain to employ violence to protect their homes in the event of a deal, and the apparent apathy of almost everyone else.

Both sides desperately need a peace agreement—Israel, to preserve its democracy and moral character, and the Palestinians, simply to enjoy some semblance of collective dignity and civil society—but in reality, only two roads can lead there. The easiest one—a peace imposed from without—strikes me as politically impossible. Imagine an American president, supported by Congress, undertaking an action that an Israeli government insists would put its existence at risk. Now imagine the Israel lobby and the American Jewish community sitting by and allowing that to happen. Look at the meager rewards compared with the headaches Obama has earned simply by trying to persuade Bibi Netanyahu to honor his predecessors' promises.

The second possibility would be that Israel voluntarily agrees to make the necessary concessions to allow the creation of a Palestinian state strong enough to attract the allegiance of the Palestinian diaspora and the rest of the Arab world. Because Israel remains, for its Jewish majority, an intensely democratic country, the political will to make these painful and risky concessions will have to come from the Israeli population itself. Unless the Palestinians can convince the Israelis that they are genuinely committed to peaceful coexistence, this road too will remain closed.

Even so, the situation is too dangerous, and the human costs are too high simply to give in to despair. But what supporters of the Palestinians need to understand is that boycotts and ritual condemnation of Israel are counterproductive, however high-minded and virtuous it may make Western leftists feel to issue them. Rather, the only goal that will help achieve a Palestinian state is one that reassures the Israeli public that the Palestinians are ready to live alongside them in peace, if not exactly in harmony.

I'm hardly the first person to notice that the best way to begin this long and painful process is to try to help the Israelis see the Palestinian people as fully human, victims through little fault of their own of historical forces that created the Jewish state in 1948 and the disastrous occupation that followed it nineteen years later. I felt at least the potential for such a process to begin while sitting in a theater at the Hamptons International Film Festival in early October during a screening of *Miral*. Directed by the American Jewish artist Julian Schnabel, and to be released in early 2011 by the American Jewish movie mogul Harvey Weinstein, *Miral* tells the true story of the Dar Al-Tifl orphanage, established in Jerusalem by Palestinian socialite Hind Husseini, following Israel's 1948 War for Independence. (Its original inhabitants lost their parents at Deir Yassin, the site of the worst massacre of that war.) Based on an autobiographical novel by Rula Jebreal and featuring an all-star international cast, *Miral* may well be the first movie ever issued in wide release to an American audience that tells the story of the conflict from a human, Palestinian perspective.

When the film was shown earlier this year in Venice, according to a report in the *New York Post*, "The Hollywood Foreign Press Association, which hands out the Golden Globes, gave Harvey a hard time during a long Q&A because he's historically been very supportive of Israel. But 'the real problem is the movie is pro-Palestinian and anti-Israel and it is going to be very difficult to get American audiences excited to see it,' said one source."

I asked Schnabel at the Hamptons screening whether he was prepared for the fallout from right-wing American Jews and neocon hardliners over the film's politics. He replied that he considers the film to be an homage to his mother—a Hadassah president on Long Island in 1948. He explained that not only had the film been enthusiastically received by an audience of 2,000 in Ramallah but that the mayor of Jerusalem had seen it and volunteered to give it an official screening there as well.

Call me a sap, but I see some cause for hope here. If Schnabel truly believes his mom would approve because "it was so obvious to me that there are more similarities between these people than differences"… If Weinstein, who calls himself "a staunch supporter of Israel," is willing to stand behind a new narrative of the conflict that acknowledges Palestinian suffering and injustice and judges this to be a commercial proposition worth taking the kind of flak that it will undoubtedly invite from Likudnik hardliners, then perhaps enough Israelis, too, will be ready one day to do the same. ■

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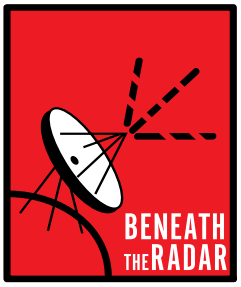
Gary Younge

Forgetting Afghanistan

During a recent debate between the Colorado senatorial candidates in Denver, Republican Ken Buck gave his considered assessment of the occupation of Afghanistan. "It's a fundamental mistake to assume that a people as backward as the Afghans are going to be able to build the industrialized nation and the democracy that it takes to be able to achieve what we would consider a Western-style democracy."

Staff Sgt. Calvin Gibbs would certainly agree. In written and videotaped evidence to Army investigators, a member of his brigade described Gibbs as harboring "pure hatred for all Afghanis," saying he "constantly referred to them as savages." So to prove his Western-style sophistication, Gibbs would allegedly order civilians to be "waxed" for sport. Then he and his fellow soldiers would pose with the corpses and, sometimes, keep skulls and other body parts as trophies.



As Buck was speaking, the race was on for the military to recall all the pictures that had been circulating in the unit before the "backward" Afghans got hold of them and drew their own conclusions about the kind of civilization their occupiers had in store for them.

This, of course, should not be confused with the raid in February that killed two pregnant women, a teenage girl and a police commander (all innocent) or the execution-style murder of eight teens and preteens in Kunar province just after Christmas—both of which were originally covered up. Or any other atrocities that we have not yet heard about or may never hear about.

But if Buck's comments were a gaffe, it is not clear by whose standards. Unlike Christine O'Donnell's flirtation with witchcraft or Meg Whitman's nanny saga, his statements made no headlines, sparked no comment and drew no fire. Among the hundred or so liberals in an overspill room watching on the big screen, there was nary a howl of derision or disbelief. Buck's Democratic opponent, Michael Bennet, did not see fit to challenge him. His remarks moved neither polls nor people nor pundits. The race did not change.

The American people, it seems, are bored with war. Like a reality show that's gone on too long, it ceases to shock, shame or even interest. In September, when pollsters asked what the most important problems facing the country are, just 3 percent mentioned Afghanistan. Even when combined with Iraq it has not reached double digits for several months. In a CBS poll in early October it did not register at all. A Pew poll the same month found that just 23 percent said they were following the situation closely. And they do not like what they see. Polls show that 60 percent of Americans believe Afghanistan is a lost cause, and roughly half compare it to Vietnam and favor a timetable for withdrawal.

Unlike Iraq, however, which was electoral kryptonite for the GOP, the Afghan war is absent from this electoral moment, suggesting that nobody will be asked to pay—let alone be *made* to pay—for these mistakes. "The essential characteristic of a nation is that all its individuals must have many things in common," wrote nineteenth-century French philosopher Ernest Renan, "and must have forgotten many things as well."

It is not difficult to understand why Americans would want to forget Afghanistan. This, remember, was the "smart war." The war the entire political class agreed about. Both Bush's war and Obama's war. A war of necessity. A war for which no excuses of poor intelligence or poor planning were needed. The war that only apologists for Islamic terrorism, anti-Americans and self-hating Americans opposed. The war in which Afghan casualties are not only not counted but actively discounted, and US fatalities have doubled since Obama came to power. The war that only one Representative, Barbara Lee, dared vote against.

Remembering that war and all that has happened in it, and placing it in a political and electoral context, would demand a reckoning with US militaristic impulses and affections, not to mention a recalibration of America's self-image as a force for unalloyed good in the world. It would force a recognition that although US military strength may be unrivaled, US power and influence are limited, and there were other options after 9/11. It would force Americans to remember what Afghans cannot forget—the sheer brutality, incompetence, futility and recklessness of an invasion and occupation that have achieved neither peace nor democracy nor security.

This situation was not only entirely predictable but was actually predicted. In her speech to the House on September 14, 2001, after which she received numerous death threats, Barbara Lee said, "We are not dealing with a conventional war. We cannot respond in a conventional manner. I do not want to see this spiral out of control.… If we rush to launch a counterattack, we run too great a risk that women, children and other noncombatants will be caught in the cross-fire.… Finally, we must be careful not to embark on an open-ended war with neither an exit strategy nor a focused target. We cannot repeat past mistakes."

But you can if you forget them, and at times amnesia seems to be America's only renewable resource. It was inevitable that at some point America's concentration would be diverted from war-related issues, not least during a savage recession. What is stunning is that it has happened while the wars are continuing. Whether it was Bill Clinton's or George W. Bush's escape of the draft, Kerry's Purple Heart or Obama's "connection" with Bill Ayers, Vietnam kept flowing through the electoral bloodstream long after the original donor had died. But with Afghanistan and, in a different sense, Iraq, where the occupation has been rebranded rather than ended, people are managing to forget about something that has not yet finished. The conversation has moved on; the trouble is, the troops haven't. ■

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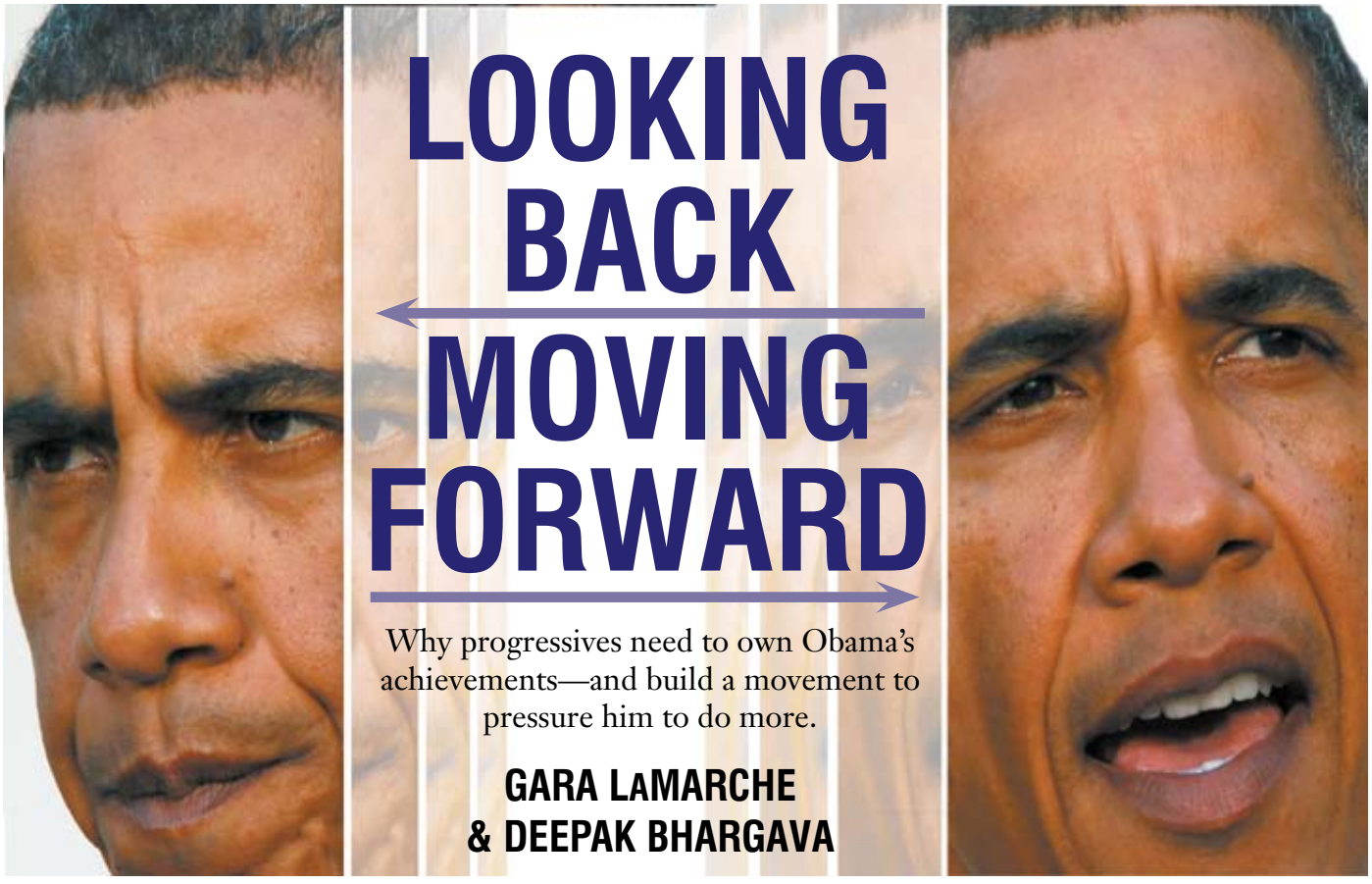

LOOKING BACK MOVING FORWARD

Why progressives need to own Obama's achievements—and build a movement to pressure him to do more.

GARA LaMARCHE & DEEPAK BHARGAVA

Twenty-one months after Barack Obama was inaugurated on a wave of hope for change in America's politics and policies, at least two important and seemingly contradictory things can be said.

First, there has been a series of significant progressive reforms: an economic stimulus law that contains far-reaching antipoverty, infrastructure, green-job and conservation measures, and that is widely credited with pulling the economy from the brink; comprehensive healthcare reform that has eluded presidents of both parties for a century; and financial regulatory reform.

For progressives, each of these accomplishments is flawed—the stimulus could have been bigger, there could have been a public option in healthcare and more teeth in financial regulation—but they are long strides in the right direction, and given the near-total opposition of Republicans and the conservatism of key Democrats, this is an impressive substantive record that has made and will make a big difference in people's lives.

Second, the nation's politics are more toxic than ever. The president's approval ratings have fallen steadily, even if they seem to have bottomed out. Independents are said to be disillusioned, many Democrats are demoralized and Republicans are in the grip of an increasingly—there is no other way to say it—crazy "base," ousting very conservative officeholders in favor of extremist Tea Party candidates who oppose virtually every role government plays.

That's where things stand today.

Two Possible Scenarios

It seems likely, even beyond the usual midterm swings, that the Republicans will make significant electoral gains, perhaps retaking the House of Representatives and even the Senate. The only bulwark against that could be a newly feisty president, a resurgent progressive movement energizing voters or the scary wackiness of many Republican candidates that renders them simply unelectable. But the latter point is not something to be sanguine about, given the election of waves of similarly "unelectable" candidates in 1980 and 1994, many of whom seem like virtual statesmen in the present environment.

Under the best scenario we can imagine, with retained but narrower Democratic majorities, it is likely that the 2009–10 period of legislative reform, which progressives fought for vigorously, is over. It is possible that comprehensive immigration reform, which some see as being in the long-term interests of Republicans as well as Democrats, can be resurrected in a Congressional lame-duck session or in 2011. But the Tea Party movement taking over the Republican Party has a strongly nativist flavor that makes this challenging, to say the least. The need to energize his core constituencies in the run-up to the 2012 elections may make President Obama more open to dramatic uses of executive power to address issues that matter to progressives, but there is no question that it will be very difficult to enact sweeping legislation in a more widely divided Congress.

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Under the worst scenario, Republican majorities, newly seeded with zealots, would take control of both houses of Congress, forcing the president and progressive advocates into a defensive posture in which the key tool available would be a veto pen. Republicans would likely unleash a tsunami of recrimination and investigation that, given the current state of discourse, would make the post-1994 Congressional attacks on the Clinton administration look like the Era of Good Feelings.

In either scenario, how this country might address frightening and urgent national problems like climate change, growing inequality and worsening poverty is increasingly hard to imagine.

What Is the Story?

The rapid change in the political climate has left us, like many advocates who have been involved in human rights and social justice issues for our entire careers, wondering what hit us. We have lost the story line.

We felt we knew it in the Bush years. America was in the grip of ideological warriors who wanted to roll back the social safety net, gutting the country's ability to meet basic human needs. They were assaulting science and academic freedom, dominating the deregulated media, squandering the country's moral standing by countenancing torture and detention without charges, and waging bloody, unnecessary wars for political gain.

We felt we knew the story line in 2008 and 2009. Though structural racism remained pervasive, it was possible to believe that we were making progress, as America was about to elect a black president. The economic crisis that was the consequence of tax and regulatory policies allowing banks to prey on the poor, coupled with the stark demonstration of the consequences of antigovernment ideology in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, created a climate for fundamental change, maybe even a paradigm shift. With Obama's inauguration, what many called a "Rooseveltian" moment was at hand, ending a forty-year interruption in the long march to a humane society. Now, perhaps, universal healthcare could be added to New Deal and Great Society achievements like Social Security and Medicare, and progressive taxation and regulation restored.

We are trying to find the story line now, and indeed it is hard because, as we suggested in our opening paragraphs, it remains to be fully written, like one of those "choose your own ending" books for kids. What we are seeing may be the last desperate gasps of a dying order or a reassertion of the fundamental conservative nature of American politics, despite periodic moderate Democratic presidents (treated as if they were dangerous radicals) over the past two generations.

We got some of what we expected since that extraordinary morning in November 2008, and indeed a checklist approach to the accomplishments of the past twenty-one months would look pretty good. But it sure doesn't feel that way. The question is, why?

Gara LaMarche is president of The Atlantic Philanthropies. Deepak Bhargava is director of the Campaign for Community Change.

In a strange way, given our own leanings, we share some of the right wing's assessments of this moment while rejecting some liberal perspectives. The change represented by the election of a black president and the restoration, however modest, of a different approach to government, is threatening to powerful interests. They are understandably concerned. A recent *New York Times* article about the closeness of lobbyists to potential next House speaker John Boehner noted that they had relied on him for help in "combating fee increases for the oil industry, fighting a proposed cap on debit card fees, protecting tax breaks for hedge-fund executives and opposing a cap on greenhouse gas emissions." Polluters and gougers have a pretty good idea of what is at stake.

As for the left, we need to be less dependent on the president—who has no magic wand—and move past the language of betrayal in which we are too often mired. For all the supposed preparation progressives did for a return to power, we haven't figured out how to relate constructively to an actual government, with all its responsibilities and broader constituent obligations. If progressives cannot "own" landmark achievements like healthcare and financial reform, how can we expect anyone else to?

It is also true that the Obama administration made serious mistakes: demobilizing the president's base for an insider style of governance, allowing the healthcare debate to go on too long without projecting a coherent narrative and, perhaps above all, failing to address the jobs crisis sufficiently. Nonetheless, placing blame on tactical decisions misses the larger, deeper dynamics.

Five Realities to Consider

In thinking about how we went from the high of January 2009 to the low of the current moment, we should give deeper attention to five interconnected realities if we are to move beyond a discussion that is not simply about the supposed mistakes of Obama and the Democrats and the perfidy of their opponents.

If we are right, those of us who are working together to advance social justice will have to do a better job of moving past campaigns, or rather buttressing them with initiatives that address these five deeper factors.

1. Attitudes Toward Government

It is astonishing in a period of the manifest failure of free-market dogma that the principal target of populist ire has been overreaching by government. From a historical perspective, the current backlash and the efforts of the Bush administration should be seen as just the most recent chapters in a sustained assault on government that goes back forty years or more. Presidents Carter and Clinton operated within the anti-government frame, with Clinton going so far as to say, "The era of big government is over." President Obama has done more, but not nearly enough, to challenge it. In retrospect, we were naïve to think that the damage done by forty years of delegitimization could be reversed even by the dramas of Hurricane Katrina and the market collapse. After the initial

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financial crisis seemed to have passed, President Obama found himself without a clear public mandate for a more robust government role; and containing and curbing government lies at the heart of the Tea Party movement, with no coherent counternarrative.

2. Political Structures

Hendrik Hertzberg, a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, summed this up well: "The prospects look pretty bleak just now and will probably look considerably bleaker after the midterm elections. The Obama experience, in my view, has highlighted the immensity of the structural barriers to reform—the 'separation of powers,' the filibuster and other Senate horrors, federalism, the electoral system at all levels, the power of money. This is the sort of thing that is catching up with us, big time. Not a pretty picture."

Not too long into the stimulus and healthcare battles, once Senator Arlen Specter had switched to the Democratic Party, it began to dawn on progressive advocates that the so-called filibuster-proof sixty-seat majority might be more imprisoning than liberating, converting the most conservative Democratic Caucus member—at times Ben Nelson of Nebraska, at other times Joe Lieberman of Connecticut—into a virtual one-man government. The arcane Senate rules, including secret holds on bills and nominees, in the hands of a minority determined to block every administration initiative, began to loom larger as an obstacle to progressive reform. It is not enough to win elections: the very undemocratic nature of Congress must be fixed. Yet the prospects of doing this successfully remain daunting.

There is almost a complete absence of an overarching narrative from the progressive side to drive policy debates and the national dialogue.

The Supreme Court's *Citizens United* ruling earlier this year, invalidating restrictions on corporate funding of elections, turned a bright spotlight on the pervasive power of money in politics. It seemed in 2008 that perhaps small-donor "people power" could carry the day. But we saw in the big legislative battles of the past year—and we're seeing in the 2010 elections—that special-interest money is more influential than ever. The floodgates opened by *Citizens United* suggest that any further progressive reform that involves economic interests may be stymied.

3. The Polarized Media

The 24/7 cable news environment, the proliferation of political blogs plying every angle of who's up and who's down, the increasingly polarized and personalized media bubbles that have made folk heroes of Glenn Beck and Rachel Maddow to their vastly different, non-overlapping constituencies—all of these developments have made it significantly harder to govern, sustain an intelligent public discourse and address serious national problems.

The Tea Party itself grew out of the infamous town hall meetings of the summer of 2009, covered by the press as if a vast insurgency was taking off, though in fact supporters of healthcare often outnumbered opponents at those meetings. The ugly fight this year over the supposed Ground Zero mosque (though it is neither a mosque nor at Ground Zero) was greatly amplified by disproportionate media coverage, and the pathetic Florida preacher who announced plans to burn Korans commanded the airwaves for days on end before September 11, until some journalists began to question their own standards for coverage.

The trends exemplified by these incidents have been a long time building and will not be easily, if ever, reversed. In our view, insufficient attention has been given to the structural character of our media crisis. In other words, it is more than a question of whether, say, progressives have a perch on MSNBC that can counter the conservative domination of Fox News. It is that, as in the broader economic realm, the deregulation of a community resource—the publicly allocated spectrum—has relieved broadcasters of any residual obligation for fairness, community service or balance.

If ever there was a moment to restore some measure of accountability—consistent with the First Amendment, of course—it would be at the dawn of a progressive administration. But no such efforts were ever seriously made, and no campaign seems to be in sight. Indeed, the relatively progressive head of the Federal Communications Commission has his hands full, in the face of adverse court rulings and intense corporate pressure, just to keep the Internet from becoming fully privatized.

In the face of this situation, it is all the more necessary that we pursue ways of disseminating information that circumvent the traditional media, using instead ethnic media and social and organizing networks to raise public awareness of the issues we care about.

4. Community Organizing

Although most progressive organizers were pleased when Obama was elected, they reminded one another that having a progressive president was not enough, that organizing needed to continue to keep the administration true to its principles. Along with the oft-cited Rahm Emanuel quote that "you never want a serious crisis to go to waste," the most recycled story was one from the New Deal in which President Roosevelt is said to have told a group of labor leaders who came to pressure him on some measure, "You've convinced me. Now go out and make me do it."

And yet it soon became clear that too many did not appreciate how important the role of an engaged outside progressive movement would be. The triumphant Obama campaign squandered weeks deciding what to do with the millions of supporters in its activist base—no other president has taken office with such a rich potential resource for governing—before deciding, fatefully, to lodge it in the Democratic Party and sap it of much of its energy. The entire early and critical debate on the economic stimulus, for example, took place

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with little effort to mobilize outside supporters.

At the same time, while the unprecedented organizing campaign on healthcare is seen as having made a critical difference, it was not sufficient to achieve the highest progressive goals, like a public option. Although we often cite the immigrants' rights movement as one of the most sophisticated on the progressive side—with dynamic grassroots leadership, growing alliances, remarkable mobilization capacity and favorable demographics—we seem further away at this moment from comprehensive reform than we were at the beginning of the year. Labor helped put Democrats in office, but it is nowhere near getting its most sought-after objective, the Employee Free Choice Act. The same is true on climate change and gay rights—the big, high-impact goals like cap-and-trade and repeal of "don't ask, don't tell" remain elusive, despite the relative money and numbers of the environmental and LGBT movements—and dramatically so on civil liberties issues like closing the prison at Guantánamo. In the last few areas, public interest litigation has been the engine of what victories we have managed. Our side simply does not have enough power.

5. The State of Ideas

FDR was famous for his fireside chats, which helped the public understand the causes and remedies for the economic crisis of that era. President Obama, so good and steady at governing and managing, has fallen short in his use of the public platform, which once seemed his greatest strength.

Not just on the stimulus but on the leading economic issue of the day—the stubborn persistence of joblessness—the president and the Democrats have no consistent voice or policy, even allowing for the obstructionist, idea-less nature of their opposition. There is an almost complete absence of any overarching narrative from the progressive side to drive policy debates and to shape the national dialogue. We wonder if part of the reason is that progressive advocates have too little to say on the core economic justice issues of the moment. We have good proposals that would materially reduce suffering—from state and local fiscal relief, to public job creation, to strengthening safety nets. But we lack a persuasive long-term vision for how to create good jobs that would address the fundamental moral and political questions that will grip the country for the next few years.

The resulting vacuum is not good for the administration, not good for the adequacy of a progressive response to the major crisis of the time, not good for the people whose lives are being turned upside down and not good for the political fortunes of those who are expected to have something coherent to offer in response to the free-market, anti-tax dogma of the right. The fear and anxiety brought about by persistently high unemployment are devastating to all progressive advocacy efforts, even those unrelated to economic justice.

One area of real need for progressives is the ongoing necessity of an effective progressive framework for national security. Though our organizations (Atlantic Philanthropies and Campaign for Community Change) are focused most intensely on domestic policy issues, many of our progressive allies have been demoralized by the lack of progress the Obama administration has made on civil liberties.

Developing a realistic and effective framework for progressives around national security is not just good politics—eliminating a popular cudgel ("the left is soft on national security") relied on by the right for generations—it is also essential, as we have largely ceded this ground and are offering few ideas that are included in the national security debate. It may be that with a far more polarized Congress, President Obama can for the next two years be increasingly focused on foreign affairs. This presents an opportunity for the left to claim a seat at the table in unexpected ways.

The Road Ahead

So what might we do in the period ahead? There is much good in the social justice infrastructure that should be preserved and strengthened, and there is much that needs to be reinvented or created. A few directional thoughts:

First, the key strategic task in this era is movement-building. Without a far stronger constituency for policy change, we will make no progress and perhaps suffer serious losses. This will involve building stronger capacity in key states and with key constituencies, and also experimenting with new approaches to movement-building. The Obama campaign, the immigrants' rights movement and the Tea Party—arguably the three biggest national movements of recent years—have several things in common: a clear national program and vision, deep investment in local organizing and especially in recruiting people to the cause, and the use of new media and technology to keep people connected and active. We will need to strengthen organizing efforts dramatically to build public will in the years ahead.

Second, the issue of race is obviously central both to the conservative backlash and to any prospect of progressive resurgence. The Obama administration has been unwilling and perhaps unable to speak cogently about the persistent racial divide in the country or to propose targeted measures to address structural disadvantage. The need for a strong and effective racial justice movement and agenda is arguably greater now than before Obama became president.

This will probably require several linked strategies: strengthening movement capacity in communities of color and relationships among such communities; thinking seriously about how to engage white working-class communities; and developing initiatives (perhaps centered on the jobs crisis) that keep universalism and targeting to disadvantaged communities at the forefront, in the framing of John Powell, executive director of the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity. At the same time that we pursue such deeper strategies, it seems essential that all of us see responding to backlash politics—whether the target is Shirley Sherrod, immigrants, Muslims or whoever is next—as our responsibility.

Third, we will have to focus more on medium- to long-term efforts rather than solely on short-term campaigns. In social change efforts, there is a classic divide between those focused on the art of the possible and those devoted to chang-

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ing what is possible. In the past two years, there has been a necessary and worthy concentration of effort on seizing the moment to secure critical policy changes in a narrow window of possibility. In the period ahead, there will be critical debates that require our attention—on jobs, the deficit, Social Security and possibly immigration reform. But more attention will have to be devoted to changing hearts and minds, recruiting more supporters and developing intellectual capital.

Finally, a recalibration in the movement's relationship to the Obama administration seems in order. The bipolar tendencies of reflexive criticism or uncritical support will have to be replaced with an approach that defines the critical task as creating the conditions to enable a renewal of the momentum for progressive change. Candidate Obama repeatedly told audiences that the campaign wasn't about him and, in a much-maligned phrase, that "we are the ones we've been waiting for." Turns out he was right. Outside movements have a different compass from that of politicians, and a little less focus on what Obama is or isn't doing might serve us well.

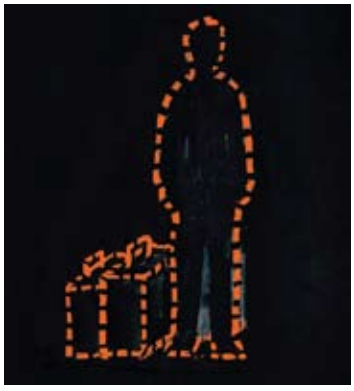
The times are difficult and the challenges are great. But a sober analysis of our predicament suggests that there are accomplishments to be celebrated and lessons to be learned from the intense period of history we have just lived through that can inform a comeback strategy. As important as developing such a strategy will be upholding the commitments that have always nurtured the progressive spirit: to resist despair, to press on in times of uncertainty and to take risks to make a path forward. ■

Lawless Courts

Immigration judges who flagrantly disregard the law are sheltered by a secretive system.

by JACQUELINE STEVENS

One day in April, J. Dan Pelletier, a government adjudicator, faces a video camera in an Atlanta immigration court. At the same moment, in a Stewart Detention Center mini-court in the Georgia hinterland, two dozen men in orange and blue jumpsuits seated behind a low rail are watching Pelletier on a monitor wheeled in front of a vacant dais. Pelletier addresses the men brusquely: "I have been told each of you has admitted the allegations and conceded removability back to your home country. Is there anybody in this group that does not want an order of removal to their home country?"



KAREN CALDICOTT

Giving the men no time for comprehension or to summon the courage to reply, Pelletier pushes on, ignoring the rule requiring him to ascertain whether each individual is abandoning a claim to remain in the United States. The interpreter, also in Atlanta, repeats in Spanish, "Nobody said anything. Does each one accept this? Please respond in the affirmative." The men sit there, mute, befuddled, watching the cranky old man like they might watch any other bad TV. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) prosecutor sits quietly in front of the rail.

Pelletier says, "I'm asking each of you to please respond orally." A few say yes or *sí* in a tone bespeaking a desire to end their confinement and stop the badgering. Many say nothing. No one has a lawyer.

Pelletier, who has the job title "immigration judge" but is employed by the Justice Department and not the judiciary, says, "If you object, say something. If you remain silent I will issue the order in each case."

Immigration court rules state, "It would offend due process if the immigration judge obtains from the group a 'mass silent waiver of the right of appeal.'" Nonetheless, Pelletier says, "I will take their silence as a waiver of their right to appeal, and I will issue an order," deporting the men en masse. Guards usher them to the hall, but four men are agitated and lag behind. "Hey," says one, "I thought we were going to talk to the judge!" Too late, a guard says, and orders them into the hall. One obeys. The DHS prosecutor notices the commotion, and at my prompting, she requests that Pelletier reopen the cases of the three still there.

Victor, 24, has been in the United States lawfully since arriving from Guatemala when he was 3. (Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, targeted him because of a seven-month misdemeanor marijuana conviction.) The DHS attorney looks through his file and tells Pelletier that Victor's mother probably included him as a dependent on her asylum application. Pelletier says he is "not comfortable" issuing an order against him, adding, "You may have an unadjusted status," meaning that Victor can apply for legal residency and be free pending a final decision.

This is Victor's big break, his reward for fighting for a hearing. Victor, however, confused by Pelletier's expression of discomfort and irritated demeanor, to say nothing of the legal gobbledegook, says, "I'll take the removal because my daughter [a 2-year-old US citizen] needs my help, and I cannot do it behind bars." Suddenly Victor is heading to Guatemala, a country he hasn't seen since infancy.

Jacqueline Stevens is a professor in the political science department at Northwestern University. Her most recent book is States Without Nations: Citizenship for Mortals *(Columbia University Press, 2009).*

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Pelletier and his colleagues are able to run roughshod over the rights of US residents because the agency that runs immigration hearings, the pompous and obscurely titled Executive Office of Immigration Review (EOIR), headquartered in Falls Church, Virginia, is a paranoid bureaucratic backwater that shields immigration judges from accountability. As long as adjudicators process a high volume of cases, the agency will ignore and even cover up serious misconduct, including deportations of US citizens or people who have other avenues of relief. One immigration judge told me, "I'm afraid there's a premium on quotas and productivity, and not the truth."

The vast number of cases handled by Pelletier and William Cassidy, another Atlanta adjudicator, has made them into agency superstars. Glenn Fogle, an Atlanta immigration attorney, says of the ICE and EOIR operation at Stewart, "They're basically a deportation machine, trying to use the discretion of the judge, who's not following the law but making his own law."

As long as adjudicators process a high volume of cases, their misconduct will be ignored or even covered up.

Fogle expresses frustration that Pelletier, Cassidy and a third Atlanta adjudicator, Grace Sease, are all former DHS attorneys. "They're your archenemies for fifteen years and now they're the judge," he says. A new hire at the Stewart court also comes from ICE.

The disregard for due process in Georgia, which has the country's third-largest docket and respondents from across the country, is a national catastrophe—although the effects are personal to Logan Guzman, a 3-year-old who for more than a year has missed the affection of his father, Pedro, because Cassidy is resisting a recommendation from the Board of Immigration Appeals to grant Pedro bond based on his close ties to US citizens. (Cassidy turned this around, ruling that these close ties would make Pedro a flight risk and held him even though Guzman had a slam-dunk case on the merits.) Fogle, Guzman's attorney, says, "That's the logic of someone who wants to keep somebody in jail no matter what, to make them give up on their case and leave. That's this whole system, not just [Cassidy]. It's a strategy used by the DHS. You don't give someone a bond or give them a high bond, and they'll give up on their case and just leave."

Some adjudicators, relying on "stipulated removal orders," are deporting people without even seeing them. According to Rachel Rosenbloom, a professor at Northeastern Law School, an immigration judge who insists on "thoroughly questioning" people who sign these orders "regularly encounters US citizens." Rosenbloom adds, "There are many judges who don't question people, and it's very likely there's going to be US citizens among those people as well, and they're not being [identified]." (The EOIR statistics on the citizenship of respondents in immigration courts come from DHS filings, not the adjudicator decisions. As a result, even though thousands of citizens have been in deportation proceedings, the official EOIR number is zero.)

The country's 238 adjudicators in fifty-nine immigration courts rule on everything from asylum applications to whether a marijuana conviction warrants deportation. Many, especially the good ones, are burned out from their share of the massive annual caseload: 390,000 cases were initiated across the country in 2009. The laws, regulations and infrastructure are inadequate to the high stakes of prolonged incarceration or banishment. Dana Marks, leader of the immigration judge union—which has been pushing Congress for more personnel and logistical support, and independence from the Justice Department—says, "We're doing death penalty cases in traffic court settings." Marks's union presidency exempts her from the agency's ban on its employees' speaking to the media.

The rot at the core of many immigration proceedings, especially in detention centers, where 50 percent of all hearings were held in 2009, up from 30 percent in 2005, deprives the public of confidence that the hundreds of thousands of people being kicked out are genuinely deportable. The Boston College Post-Deportation and Human Rights Project receives inquiries from people worldwide and has identified dozens of US residents unlawfully shipped back to their countries of origin. The group is joining other advocates in pressing for legal changes to allow former US residents to reopen their cases from abroad.

The Post-Deportation Project, formerly known as Ruby Slippers, has an office in Zacualpa, Guatemala, and is establishing points of contact in the Azores and Ecuador for research and legal assistance. Referring to the thousands of unlawful deportations, co-director Daniel Kanstroom, a Boston College law professor, says, "We're only limited by the number of lawyers we can hire."

The underlying problems go back to the Clinton administration's support of the bad 1996 immigration law and bad adjudicators. In 1999 John Zastrow, employed as an adjudicator since 1983, deported Johann Francis, a US citizen, from the Eloy Detention Center in Arizona to Jamaica. It took Francis ten years to return. (Following a 1998 teenage brawl, Francis, then 19, completed a six-month sentence at an Oregon boot camp. The day of his release, without warning, he was picked up by immigration agents and shipped to Eloy.)

According to Francis's file, an agent at Eloy filled out a "Request for a Prompt Removal," but Francis never saw or signed it. Nonetheless, on April 7, 1999, without a hearing, Zastrow ordered Francis deported. Two months later, still in Eloy and unaware of Zastrow's ruling, Francis followed the instructions of a deportation officer and hand-wrote a request to be deported so he could leave confinement. "I guess it was just a CYA [cover your ass] thing," he now says of this document. "How can this happen in America?"

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About Your Professor

Dr. Randall Bartlett is Professor of Economics and Director of the Urban Studies Program at Smith College, where he has taught for 30 years. A highly skilled teacher, Professor Bartlett has twice won all-college teaching awards at Smith College, and was the 2003 recipient of its Distinguished Professor Award.

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In late June 1999 Francis, "the guy who runs for school president," as he puts it, was sleeping on the streets in Kingston; he later moved to a rural area, where he survived on coconuts. "You drink two and you'll be full," he explains, adding that he became very sick from malnourishment.

He was stuck there even after he found his mother two years later. "I was able to prove who my mother was," he says, but since Jamaica filed birth certificates by number, not name, "I couldn't prove who *I* was." After Jamaica digitized its birth certificate registry, Francis was able to apply for a passport and return home in late 2009. He is now advising two other men in Jamaica, one deported last year, struggling to document their own US citizenship. Zastrow's last year on the job was 2000, but the federal courts are still overturning his orders for the few lucky enough to return for a hearing. And the decades-old pattern of wrongful deportations is continuing under the Obama administration.

Among those stuck in immigration jails today are people with no criminal history and, crucially, no lawyers to demand bond hearings. People who should be free may languish for months. When I met Clifford Bryan in Stewart, he was crying and contemplating suicide, largely because the adjudicators refused to grant a bond hearing and he feared being stuck there forever. "I filled out the paper [requesting a bond hearing] and sent it two times. They didn't send it back to me," he said. He was held for almost four months in Georgia before Cassidy finally set a $1,500 bond, the lowest amount possible, and Bryan was free to return to his wife in Michigan. Meanwhile, taxpayers had paid about $8,000 to the Corrections Corporation of America for his incarceration. In October the DHS issued welcome new rules resulting in ICE freeing hundreds nationwide, but many more who meet the criteria for release remain locked up, including Pedro Guzman.

The agency that oversees immigration courts deliberately withholds basic information from the media and researchers.

The public's ignorance of the idiocies endemic to the EOIR's business as usual and the calamities these entail is no accident. The agency deliberately withholds basic information from the media and researchers, and its top officials routinely decline requests for interviews, as acting director Thomas Snow and others did twice for this article. (Snow is "acting," so he won't lose his civil-service job in the EOIR.)

According to David Burnham, a former *New York Times* reporter and co-director of the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, the staff in the EOIR public affairs office have a "bizarre conception of their role. We ask simple administrative questions and they say, Oh, you have to submit a FOIA request." Lauren Alder Reid, the agency's public affairs legal counsel, sent numerous e-mails along these lines to me but, along with top agency officials, is not responding to document requests from the agency's FOIA office as required by law.

The EOIR obscures its operations as well by admonishing immigration judges not to speak with the media, in contrast with other adjudicative agencies and the judiciary. When alerted to this, Charles Geyh, a law professor at the University of Indiana and a reporter for the American Bar Association's *Model Code of Judicial Conduct*, sounded taken aback. With the exception of prohibiting judges from commenting on pending cases, "it's not just that the rules say that you can do it, but they actively encourage it. Banning it makes the process seem less transparent and doesn't promote the confidence in the courts we're trying to encourage. Not conveying to the public the work they do and why they do it and how they do it is nonsense."

Even the court hearings are hidden from public scrutiny, especially those in detention centers, despite a regulation requiring otherwise. In August Dan Kowalski, an immigration attorney in Austin, Texas, and editor of *Bender's Immigration Bulletin*, sent the EOIR an e-mail asking whether the public would be allowed to attend hearings at a new court in the Pearsall, Texas, detention center. Kowalski explained his concern to me: "Sunlight is the best disinfectant. If there's nobody watching, it's easier for the prosecutors and immigration judges to take shortcuts or be dismissive or even abusive with the respondents." The EOIR's public affairs officer, Elaine Komis, replied to Kowalski's query by telling him to "contact GEO," a private security firm under contract to the DHS.

GEO's track record is bleak, according to Sandy Restrepo, an ACLU policy intern in Washington State. "Community members and law students…are getting hassled or turned away by security when they come in to watch the immigration hearings" at the Tacoma Detention Center run by GEO, Restrepo wrote in her July message to an immigration advocate listserv. Restrepo told me that since a 2008 Seattle University report documenting GEO's mistreatment of people in its custody, there have been "constant problems" with court access. She blames the EOIR as well as GEO. "The court administrator doesn't want a similar type of report to come out" about the Tacoma immigration courts, Restrepo believes.

Irina Kalinka, a Bard College student, decided that for her spring research project she would attend hearings at a nearby immigration court housed in the Downstate Prison in Fishkill, New York. The Fishkill EOIR office said she should call the prison for "security clearance." After being transferred to different prison personnel and calling several times, she was told by a prison official to fax a letter to the "Central Office." She asked where that was. "After a long silence," Kalinka wrote in an e-mail, "he just hung up." She left messages, but no one called her back. "The process of trying to find access is not just confusing," she wrote, "but I would go so far as to say actively discouraging." Kowalski suggests relocating the

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Actually, it's worse. The Tuskegee experiment was finally *stopped*, and the US Government *apologized* to the victims' families. But the US Government has *not* apologized to the families of these veterans, and has *not* stopped the policies that continue to kill thousands of veterans every year. (Several may die by the time you finish this issue of *The Nation*.)

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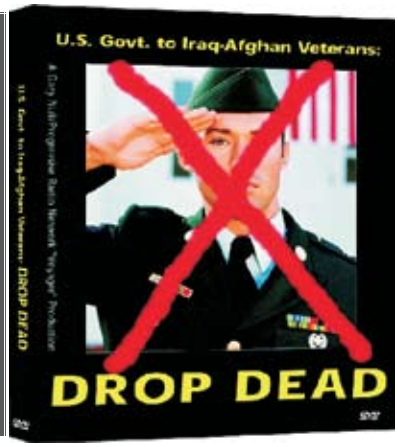

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courts to a "different part of the building that doesn't need so much security, or give up on the notion of having them in the detention center altogether."

An employee of the immigration court in the agency's headquarters in Falls Church, Virginia, concerned I might be with the media, would not allow me to attend a hearing even after I had passed security; she was overruled by a superior, who said this was a "mistake." Despite a regulation stipulating that hearings are open to the public, another official disclosed a policy requiring court personnel to ascertain if an observer is with the media before entrance is allowed.

On my entering the hearing, immigration judge Roxanne Hladylowycz announced to the respondent, her attorney and the DHS attorney that an observer had entered her courtroom and indicated that she was not asking their permission for the observer to remain. Immigration courts are open to the public, she explained to a group in Memphis, who appeared on a huge, gorgeous flat-screen worthy of the Super Bowl. "She has a right to be here."

And then I observed a fascinating and scrupulously well-run hearing in which Hladylowycz figured out that the government's claim of fraud was based on confusion arising from the fact that the respondent, Alina, and her sister, despite both taking on their husbands' last names, had married men with the same last name. Alina's hearing took about an hour, sixty minutes longer than those for people in mass removal hearings.

To protect their cronies and avoid outside scrutiny, top brass sweep complaints about immigration judges under the rug.

Complaints about immigration judges fall under the jurisdiction of the Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR), and people may file there directly, but the EOIR instructs immigration court stakeholders to lodge complaints with the EOIR itself. Instead of passing complaints on to the OPR, as the website promises, the EOIR top brass, to protect their cronies and avoid outside scrutiny, sweeps complaints under the rug. From September 2009 to August 2010, none of the OPR investigations originated with misconduct complaints filed with the EOIR. All but one occurred when federal courts overruled immigration judge decisions, per OPR policy. Since more than 84 percent of people in immigration jails lack attorneys and may submit complaints to the EOIR but will not file appeals in federal court, the OPR will never learn of most misconduct.

The EOIR batted away my recent complaint documenting extensive misconduct over the past eighteen months by Cassidy, who has worked in EOIR headquarters, and the Atlanta court administrator, Cynthia Long, including criminal and civil lawbreaking. The information should have been passed on to the OPR and the Office of the Inspector General, but according to EOIR attorney MaryBeth Keller, it stayed in-house at the EOIR.

Protecting misconduct is old news at the EOIR, which has been receiving complaints about Cassidy for years, including in the late 1990s from David Farshy, an attorney who attracted Cassidy's ire for protesting his due process violations. In one case, Cassidy left a message on Farshy's answering machine revealing an unlawful private conversation with the government's attorney and stating that he had decided Farshy's client's case before the hearing. Rather than fire Cassidy for these flagrant violations, the agency hired the government attorney with whom he'd had the conversation—Sease, now an Atlanta adjudicator who attracts her own misconduct complaints.

The experience of Adolfo Equite-Sequen, who lived in Los Angeles for twenty years and is eligible to apply for a green card, is another chilling example of the effects of moving DHS prosecutors from behind the table to behind the judge's bench. In September 2009, Equite was arrested for public drunkenness and, because of ethnic profiling, sent to ICE custody. A few days later he was shipped to Eloy based on an unauthenticated fingerprint match with the record of someone whose first name is Martin and who was ordered deported in 2004. ICE claimed no records existed for Equite.

Linda Spencer-Walters was a DHS attorney in 2008. In February 2010, she was Equite's adjudicator. Relying solely on the evidence from her old office, she discredited all of Equite's statements, denied bond and would not reopen his case even after a nonprofit attorney proved the DHS possessed Equite's bona fide immigration file.

Equite's pending appeal points out that Spencer-Walters ignored blatant inconsistencies in the ICE arrest report and admitted into evidence an unauthenticated fingerprint associated with a signature that did not match that of Equite, now in Guatemala.

Sarah Owings, EOIR liaison for the Atlanta chapter of the American Immigration Lawyers Association last year, said of similar events she has observed in immigration hearings, "Things are happening so quickly. They're trusting ICE has done their job and done the paperwork. They're not acting as adjudicators when they only get one side of the story and it may not be correct." Dana Marks sums up the problem: "As long as we are housed in the culture of a law enforcement agency, it's going to be difficult to achieve judicial neutrality." But severing the EOIR from the Justice Department, and the union's other worthwhile objectives, could take years.

Starting today, Attorney General Eric Holder can appoint a new director for the EOIR, ideally someone who will run this law enforcement agency according to the rule of law. The Justice Department could also issue new regulations for the EOIR to achieve immigration reforms that may not be possible through Congress or the DHS, including one mandating the release of anyone who is not given a bond hearing within forty-eight hours of a request. President Obama, whose own citizenship has been called into question, might want to take advantage of it. ■

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The New Civic Activism in Russia

Most successful protests are focused on local issues where there are conflicts among the elite.

by VADIM NIKITIN

"Imagine a neighborhood soccer team defeating a squad of professionals because the professionals all got drunk, beat each other up, broke each other's legs and didn't make it out onto the pitch."

What sounds like the plot of an absurdist play is actually sociologist Boris Kagarlitsky's description of a recent protest in Russia, when community activists made international headlines by blocking the government's construction of a toll road through the suburban Moscow forest of Khimki.

KAREN CALDICOTT

When authorities arrested a group of people opposed to the start of logging for the proposed Moscow–St. Petersburg highway in July, they were not prepared for the intensity of the backlash. After all, the forest's demolition had been planned for years, and previous protests had come to nothing. But over the next two months, thousands marched and attended concerts in solidarity with the forest defenders, culminating in an appeal to Russian President Dmitri Medvedev from U2 frontman Bono to stop the project. On August 26 the president reversed course and ordered a halt to construction, pending further consultation; a month later, he even fired the once invincible Moscow mayor, Yuri Luzhkov, who had become a key supporter of the road.

The Khimki protests rode a growing wave of civic activism in Russia. And in succeeding where other recent protests had failed—against a polluting paper mill on Lake Baikal, in favor of Article 31 (the Russian Constitution's protection of freedom of assembly)—they have inspired an intense debate about the prospects and limitations of Russian civil society.

Yevgenia Chirikova, the entrepreneurial 33-year-old mother of two who leads the movement, believes that with organization, hard work and persistence, ordinary people have the power to effect change even in the absence of a functioning democracy, provided they focus on concrete issues close to their lives.

Her can-do message is catching on. Chronicling another outbreak of what the *Vedomosti* newspaper has called "the forest uprising," an October 1 poll by the Levada Center found that residents of the nearby town of Zhukovsky are willing to protect their local Tsagovsky forest from a similar road development. "We have shown that when a critical mass of popular resistance reaches a certain point, even the Russian authorities will make concessions," Chirikova says.

But others caution against a view of civic activism that focuses on mass mobilization while ignoring broader power structures. Kagarlitsky believes that the Khimki protests succeeded where similar actions have failed, not because of their superior organization but because they played into an existing conflict within the elite. "If the authorities saw no political advantage in the Khimki protests," he says, "then the forest would have been fully cut down long ago without any consultation."

Nikolai Petrov, an authority on civil society at the liberal Carnegie Endowment, concurs. Civil society actions can succeed, he says, only when they are able to ally with one elite group against another. This was precisely how environmental groups succeeded in getting the government and oil companies to reroute a pipeline around sensitive areas of Lake Baikal four years ago. Similar protests to prevent the razing of a dacha village in Rechnik in January failed because protesters could not find an elite sponsor.

But this ostensible weakness can become a strength if Khimki-style grassroots civic movements actively embrace a more Machiavellian, divide-and-conquer approach to the elites. "Even if we accept that the Khimki victory came down not to our strength but to a tactical coincidence of circumstances," says Kagarlitsky, "that does not mean that we must be pessimistic about the fate of civil society in Russia. We must closely monitor what goes on in government, very carefully observe their internal conflicts and use these elite disagreements to leverage our goals."

Such a calm tactical strategy could pay dividends because the most adversarial civil society groups tend to be the least successful. This is not just a result of state repression but because broad antigovernment protests end up alienating government loyalists, who remain a strong majority of the population. According to the most recent Levada Center poll, 77 percent of Russians approve of Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's performance, and 73 percent approve of President Medvedev's.

Many citizens have also become alienated from traditional civil society players such as NGOs, which they feel do not reflect their values and everyday experience. "The relationship between the civil society represented by NGOs and real society is the same as the relationship of the Soviet Communist Party to the working class," says Kagarlitsky.

People tend to view traditional NGOs with suspicion because of their ties to foreign organizations. It's a sentiment enthusiastically fanned by the government, which in 2006 passed a controversial law to monitor and restrict foreign support for NGOs following allegations of covert British funding of the Moscow Helsinki Group and the Eurasia Foundation. "We don't want them led by puppeteers from abroad," said Putin, who was president at the time. By contrast, a neighborhood group protesting

Vadim Nikitin is a freelance journalist and Russia analyst.

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road construction is more often seen as voicing legitimate concerns without ulterior motives, says Lisa Sundstrom, an expert on Russian civil society at the University of British Columbia.

Moreover, targeted and localized actions can also be more inclusive than abstract political campaigns. "We are fighting for something very accessible and understandable to ordinary people," Chirikova says. "A babushka will not understand what Article 31 is, but she knows what a forest is."

Equally crucial, the Khimki model of activism can help build social capital in a country rife with political apathy and personal mistrust—among people and also between the government and the population. In fact, indifference and suspicion of collective action might be as important as authoritarianism in explaining Russia's lack of democracy.

"Even if there were completely free and open elections and a completely free right of assembly," says Sundstrom, "I don't think you would see large amounts of public activism." She argues that public disinterest, not repression, is the number-one problem facing civil society movements. That is exactly the kind of anomie that Chirikova is crusading against. "Our population either patiently endures any humiliations to the last or explodes into civil violence," she says. Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev recently sounded a similar warning, saying, "The most dangerous thing is if the tension building up in society suddenly bursts onto the street with such a force that we'll all be in trouble."

Adds Chirikova, "People here are not used to working systematically for their own interests. Yes, that means attending pickets instead of spending the summers barbecuing sausages. It's hard work." And dangerous: after a run-in between Khimki activists and riot police in July, two protesters, Alexei Gaskarov and Maxim Solopov, were detained on suspicion of vandalizing a government building. Kept in pretrial detention without charge for more than two months despite an international campaign for their release, Solopov was conditionally released on October 18 while Gaskarov remains behind bars pending review.

But will these newly energized citizens eventually translate their civic engagement into political demands? "I don't think the Khimki protesters are going to suddenly start supporting the opposition parties and demanding political liberalization," says Sundstrom. According to Harvard's Marshall Goldman, while ecological protests have historically foreshadowed political change, playing a role in the collapse of the Soviet Union, the enduring strength and popularity of the Putin/Medvedev government would make that transition unlikely in the near future. What's more, the government may even try to quietly resume road construction in Khimki once the dust settles and the foreign journalists go home.

However, Khimki was always meant to achieve specific, practical goals, not broad sociopolitical reform. Given the failure of the liberal opposition during the past decade, perhaps it's time to try bringing democracy in through the backdoor. ■

Letters

(continued from page 2)

New York City
Two people I think you left out are Grace Paley and Eve Ensler. Paley was an activist and author who fought tirelessly for progressive causes all her life. Wherever there was a demonstration for peace and justice, Grace was there! Eve Ensler, author of *The Vagina Monologues*, has devoted her life to stopping violence, envisioning a world where women and girls are free to thrive rather than merely survive.
Evelyn Triantafillou

Pittsburgh
I have some reservations about Margaret Sanger. Everything you say is true—she was the most important proponent of the birth control movement, which indeed helped liberate women—but her push for birth control was in part informed by her belief in eugenics. This makes the label "progressive" somewhat dubious.
Mark Colvin

Portland, Me.
Apart from Martin Luther King Jr. and Bill Moyers, *The Nation* appears blind to progressives in the faith community. Michael Harrington, who left the Catholic Church, is deserving, but his mentor, Dorothy Day, is more so. She mothered the Catholic pacifism that bloomed in the protests, initiated by the Berrigan brothers, that marked the beginning of the end of the Vietnam War and generated the US Catholic bishops' 1983 pastoral. She celebrated the dignity of poverty, which spawned hundreds of Catholic Worker houses, and her jaundiced view of capitalism foreshadowed and influenced the 1986 bishops' pastoral.
William H. Slavick

Polson, Mont.
I'm disappointed that you neglected to place Myles Horton on the list. And if you don't know who Myles was, *shame on you*!
Peter Daniels

Stowe, Ohio
The omission of Walter Francis White is a serious error. He transformed the NAACP into the world's most important civil rights organization, advised the American UN delegation and worked tirelessly for people of color all over the world. Fifty? He belongs on anyone's top *ten*.
Robert L. Zangrando

Sandisfield, Mass.
Where is Jim Farmer, founder of the civil rights movement? First sit-in at a segregated Chicago restaurant in 1942 (MLK was 13). Founded CORE that same year. And that's not the half of it.
Val Coleman

Pleasant, N.J.
You should include Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, as the most influential early suffragists, and Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, as the leaders of that movement when women finally got the vote.
Denise Di Stephan

New York City
Leonard Bernstein threw parties that raised the consciousness and conscience of people not known to be progressive. Smeared by Tom Wolfe as "radical chic," his efforts delivered millions of dollars to civil rights, antiwar and other causes.
Manfred Kirchheimer

Los Angeles
Congratulations on a wonderful article. I would have included Carey McWilliams—but that's me.
Emil Reisman

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Books & the Arts.

That Seventies Show

by RICK PERLSTEIN

I've been calling 1973, as I sort through my research for a political and cultural history of the United States in the '70s, the Year Without Christmas Lights. News of fuel shortages—what would come to be called the "energy crisis"—had begun cropping up in the spring, around the same time the resignations of Nixon confidants John Ehrlichman and Bob Haldeman introduced to a shocked Middle America the likelihood that the Watergate scandal went all the way to the top. By Memorial Day weekend, with Texaco rationing the sale of gasoline along the most heavily traveled highways, there was talk of outlawing the Indianapolis 500. "And pleasure boating," a letter writer to the *Chicago Tribune* suggested: "Better to go slow on gasoline than to be cold next winter."

At the annual Soap Box Derby in Akron, Ohio, the festivities partook of the zeitgeist: Nixon-like, a lad by the name of James Gronen was disqualified for outfitting his car with a battery-enhanced magnet. (Cheating Always Part of Soap Box Fun, shot back a headline in the *Los Angeles Times*; the dissenting op-ed writer called what the boy did "enterprise.") At Congressional hearings, paranoid witnesses said the oil companies, whose profits soared 62 percent in the third quarter, had rigged the shortages. In September the Republican governor of Oregon passed an edict limiting commercial and decorative electric signs at night; in October the debate was over whether to end Daylight Savings Time to save energy. Then came the OPEC oil embargo—in the same week that President Nixon fired special prosecutor Archibald Cox and the scary White House chief of staff, Alexander Haig, who was infamous for coming to work in his general's uniform, ordered the FBI to seal the office of the attorney general. "There was a real sense," said one of Cox's aides, of the possibility of "a fascist takeover."

By the yuletide season, with the price of crude quadrupled, the Los Angeles City Council was debating a plan to cut street lighting by 50 percent, allow businesses only fifty hours of operation a week and require business and industry to keep the thermostat at sixty-eight degrees for heating and seventy-eight for cooling. A lead *Los Angeles Times* editorial proposed forgoing outdoor holiday decorations. A letter writer from Whittier further suggested a moratorium on Christmas cards. Another, responding to an article debunking rumors that the Pentagon planned to turn off the eternal flame at the gravesite of President John F. Kennedy to save energy, strenuously objected: "Wouldn't it seem logical to use that gas for a better use such as heating homes or office buildings rather than just burning it for no real purpose whatever?"

Darkness fell across the land. Things fell apart. The year was rung out with the unlikeliest Top 40 hit ever—Merle Haggard's mournful country dirge "If We Make It Through December."

AP

Evel Knievel parachuting down in a rocket after an ill-fated attempt to soar across the Snake River Canyon in Twin Falls, Idaho, September 8, 1974

Rick Perlstein is the author, most recently, of Nixonland: The Rise of a President and the Fracturing of America.

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Books Discussed in This Essay

It Seemed Like Nothing Happened
America in the 1970s.
By Peter Carroll.
Rutgers. 421 pp. $25.95.

The Seventies
The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics.
By Bruce J. Schulman.
Free Press. 334 pp. Paper $17.

Something Happened
A Political and Cultural Overview of the Seventies.
By Edward D. Berkowitz.
Columbia. 283 pp. Paper $26.

How We Got Here
The 70's: The Decade That Brought You Modern Life—for Better or Worse.
By David Frum.
Basic. 421 pp. Paper $18.95.

Right Star Rising
A New Politics, 1974–1980.
By Laura Kalman.
Norton. 473 pp. $27.95.

Rightward Bound
Making America Conservative in the 1970s.
Edited by Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer.
Harvard. 373 pp. Paper $21.

America in the Seventies
Edited by Beth Bailey and David Farber.
Kansas. 246 pp. Paper $16.95.

No Direction Home
The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968–1980.
By Natasha Zaretsky.
North Carolina. 320 pp. Paper $25.95.

Until the Last Man Comes Home
POWs, MIAs, and the Unending Vietnam War.
By Michael Allen.
North Carolina. 433 pp. $30.

Roots Too
White Ethnic Revival in Post–Civil Rights America.
By Matthew Jacobson.
Harvard. 483 pp. Paper $21.

Pivotal Decade
How the United States Traded Factories for Finance in the Seventies.
By Judith Stein.
Yale. 367 pp. $32.50.

1973 Nervous Breakdown
Watergate, Warhol, and the Birth of Post-Sixties America.
By Andreas Killen.
Bloomsbury. 312 pp. $24.95.

Decade of Nightmares
The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America.
By Philip Jenkins.
Oxford. 344 pp. $17.95.

The Shock of the Global
The 1970s in Perspective.
Edited by Niall Ferguson, Charles S. Maier, Erez Manela and Daniel J. Sargent.
Harvard. 434 pp. $29.95.

Stayin' Alive
The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class.
By Jefferson Cowie.
New Press. 464 pp. $27.95.

While writing books about the past, I think about the present. It's not intentional, but somehow my books end up being written under the sign of a political mood. In *Before the Storm*, finished in 1999, I wrote in, and of, a time of heady economic confidence, with Eisenhower-era Republicans and Clinton-era Democrats both convinced of the necessity of ideological sail-trimming to manage an "end to history"; and then, in 1964 as in 1999, a more feverish ideological age seemed to beckon. *Nixonland*, finished in 2007, was about right-wing presidents exploiting the public's fears as a cover for betraying the public's trust. What story of our own times will my '70s book reveal? I'll know only after it's done.

I remember standing before the Capitol building on January 20, 2009, thinking about the project as I listened to President Barack Obama's inaugural address: the decade just past revealed an awful pattern of national decline, of exhausted, feckless elites and debased institutions. Obama said it was time to "set aside childish things," and I wondered whether the next several years of my life, as a citizen and a historian, would be spent bearing witness to the question of how a more grown-up national community might work through this historical trauma. Or would our nation and leaders begin to look long and hard and critically at the crises of our recent past—only to flinch and choose a blithe official optimism instead? The answer remains to be written, but the question is redolent of how we have come to understand the choices the country faced in the 1970s.

The title of the first book by a historian to canvass American culture and politics in the 1970s, *It Seemed Like Nothing Happened*, published in 1982, was meant to be ironic; plenty happened, of course, between its covers. But when the book was reissued in 1990, the joke still signified: the world turned on a dime just about annually in the years beginning with a one and a nine and a six; in comparison, the years between the presidencies of Nixon and Reagan felt dolorous, uneventful, derivative, hardly an actual historical moment at all. Was Gerald Ford ever really president? He couldn't even get himself shot straight.

The sense that a decade of sheer *uneventfulness* had just passed was suggested by the conclusions arrived at in a 1978 book by the public opinion expert Everett Carll Ladd. The title—*Where Have All the Voters Gone?*—spoke to a widespread sense among opinion elites that the most eventful "thing" that "happened" in the 1970s was apathy. In politics, Ladd thought, given the Watergate Babies' triumph in the 1974 Congressional elections and Carter's victory in 1976, America merely returned to its natural equilibrium: Democrats on top. Nixon's eight years, Ladd concluded in a chapter titled "The Unmaking of the Republican Party," were but an odd interregnum: the "GOP today is in a weaker position than any major party of the U.S. since the Civil War." Daniel Bell had noted in 1976, in his oracular *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*, that one of the puzzles of industrial democracy was that masses of voters didn't use their electoral muscle to command a more equal distribution of wealth. He predicted that soon they would. Who could buy what the Republicans were selling? A scant four years later, blue-collar workers didn't vote themselves a raise; they voted themselves Ronald Wilson Reagan. Yes: something happened.

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A wave of '70s histories appeared with the turn of the new millennium. Their common frame was still the defensive argument that arguments needed to be made about the 1970s. Bruce Schulman's *The Seventies* (2001) said on the flap it would take on the conventional wisdom that "nothing revolutionary, nothing with long-lasting significance" took place during the decade; another, by George Washington University historian Edward Berkowitz, was titled *Something Happened*. David Frum's *How We Got Here* was outfitted with a triple-barreled subtitle that protested too much: *The 70's: The Decade That Brought You Modern Life—for Better or Worse*. These books' covers were in interchangeable leisure-suit browns and oranges, though they were distinguished by an emphasis on each scholar's specialty: Schulman is illuminating on the post-'60s transformation of the South; Berkowitz, a specialist on the history of Social Security, is splendid on policy; and Frum, a conservative, is insightful on the decline of liberal religion in favor of evangelical Christianity. All lean, if softly, on the plotline of the nation's unexpected ideological shift rightward.

In this sense, Laura Kalman's recently published *Right Star Rising: A New Politics, 1974–1980* feels more like an end than a beginning—though a notably accomplished one. Her chronological but thematic chapters (another trait all those books share) are full of wise judgments and mature summaries. Her accounts of the social and political contexts and ramifications of federal court decisions, and internal White House deliberations over legal issues like Ford's pardon of Nixon and the Carter administration's dilatory attempt to reach a position on affirmative action, are especially rich. She is also a fine explicator of the complicated transformations of America's diplomatic posture during the Nixon, Ford and Carter presidencies. Sections on culture war issues and electoral battles are more perfunctory. But laced throughout are some awesome primary-source nuggets. How did Jimmy Carter truly feel about affirmative action? "Hate to see Bakke excluded from Med School," he wrote in the margin of one memo Kalman found. Her sharply original account of the sordid US collapse in Saigon in the spring of 1975 bestows to posterity a genuinely new cold war lunatic, worthy of the likes of James Jesus Angleton and Curtis LeMay, in the person of US Ambassador Graham Martin, whose cloud-cuckoo-land cables back home are so febrile and Panglossian that Francis Ford Coppola could build an *Apocalypse Now* sequel around him. ("The most calming influence in Saigon is my wife who goes about her regular way, makes appointments for weeks in advance, and who has refused to pack anything at all.") Kalman is great, too, at revealing the obsessive resentment professional conservatives like Richard Viguerie bore toward Ronald Reagan while he was president for supposedly selling out conservatism.

But none of these syntheses, Kalman's included, deliver that instant of *aha* crucial to all great historical argumentation, that disturbed state of fresh apperception that turns confusion into unexpected new patterns of clarity and cliché into refreshing new doubt. These kinds of breakthroughs are usually the product of ferment at the scholarly version of the grassroots: young scholars asking new questions and tilling fresh furrows through archival sources. Any historian who sees further than most stands on the shoulders of graduate students. So it is appropriate that the first glimmerings of a transformative historical literature on the 1970s appeared a few years ago in the sort of anthologies in which young scholars in the stage of turning dissertations into books first present their research to the wider public.

Was Gerald Ford ever really president? He couldn't even get himself shot straight.

In *Rightward Bound: Making America Conservative in the 1970s*, edited by Schulman and Julian Zelizer, the most eye-opening chapter, by Suleiman Osman, an assistant professor at George Washington University, focuses of all things on the young rehabbers of urban brownstones in neighborhoods like Park Slope in Brooklyn. At a time when seven out of ten New Yorkers said they were afraid to walk a block from their homes, the rehabbers pioneered a hip kind of neither-left-nor-right urban capitalism that feels utterly familiar to us but has never quite been effectively named before. Osman tells a paradigmatic story about the institutionalization and domestication of 1960s insurgent energies. In *America in the Seventies*, edited by Beth Bailey and David Farber, the standout essay is "'It Makes You Want to Believe': Celebrating the Bicentennial in an Age of Limits," by Christopher Capozzola, an associate professor at MIT. He juxtaposes two quotes that signal the ideological direction toward which Middle America would soon tend. A leading spokesman for the left described the celebration thus: "Corporate America has conceived a bicentennial plan to manipulate the mass psychology of an entire nation back into conformity with its vision of what American life should be." The *Birmingham News*, on the other hand, said this: "America turned the corner Sunday on a self-induced illness of the spirit and stretched its psyche in a burst of national joy and celebration." Which sounded more attractive? Ask anyone who voted for Reagan in 1980.

The young scholars of the 1970s frequently discern in the decade a new structure of feeling marked by a palpable longing for innocence. In *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968–1980*, Natasha Zaretsky inventively untangles a skein of cultural imagery that depicted the nation in terms of a family in peril—a crisis of literal and symbolic fatherlessness—and materialized in such disparate realms as the panic over dependency on Arab oil, the debate over Christopher Lasch's *The Culture of Narcissism* and emotions associated with the return of America's prisoners of war from Vietnam. Michael Allen's *Until the Last Man Comes Home* works out the politics of the POWs in staggering depth, first as they were exploited by the Nixon administration as sentimental heroes for a war without heroes, then as the unreasonable hysteria over veterans supposedly still "missing in action" became the perverse symbolic stand-in by which a traumatized nation negotiated its own sense of betrayal at the hands of an elite who dragged us into the war in the first place. In *Roots Too*, Matthew Jacobson shows how the ABC miniseries based on Alex Haley's slavery chronicle stirred white America to an unprecedented engagement with the American past: it made every American a historian—of themselves. It kicked off, instead of an honest and critical national reckoning with America's traumatic racial past, a booming trade in sentimental white ethnic nostalgia.

These are writers who grew up in the '70s, who seek to make sense, sometimes self-consciously, of the signs and wonders that shaped their adult selves. They suggest that the most salient changes in the '70s were cultural. For Judith Stein, a distin-

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guished historian of American industry and the author of *Pivotal Decade: How the United States Traded Factories for Finance in the Seventies*, this is a problem. She lumps much existing '70s historiography with a goofy popular literature that insists on seeing the decade in terms of pet rocks, shag carpeting, transcendental meditation and disco. She is especially put out by scholarly analyses of pop culture. "Some written accounts of the decade descend to kitsch," she says. She's talking about the history professors' books, too.

Stein also sets herself against "Whiggish stories of rising conservatism [that] do not intersect with any political or economic event," criticizing journalist Thomas Byrne Edsall's classic accounts of the '70s and '80s backlash against liberalism, *The New Politics of Inequality* (1984) and *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics* (1991). This is unfair. The political and economic event Edsall's books intersected with was the period during which they were researched and written. Back then, the idea that the '70s had produced an ongoing conservative hegemony was by no means universally apparent. Edsall was the writer most responsible, in real time, for making the notion of a '70s antiliberal ascendancy universally apparent.

Stein also roundly excoriates historians' tendencies to "psychologize the decade's conflicts." She ascribes this trait to two recent books I find in no way deserve her condescension—Andreas Killen's *1973 Nervous Breakdown: Watergate, Warhol, and the Birth of Post-Sixties America* and Philip Jenkins's *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America*, both richly fascinating accounts of the world-making cultural traumas that were precisely what made the period feel so distinct. (She also arraigns a third volume, *Nixonland*, for the same psychologizing sin, a judgment upon which the present reviewer shall remain neutral.) Stein is a historian of thunderous judgments. Against all these armchair shrinks, conservo-Whigs and scholarly bell-bottom-ologists, she presents herself as a stark alternative: "I start with different assumptions. I began this book after I learned that the 1970s was the only decade other than the 1930s wherein Americans ended up poorer than they began."

It's not really a news flash. Charles Maier, the historian who helped guide the graduate students behind the 2008 conference "The Global 1970s," writes in the first chapter of the volume that issued from it, *The Shock of the Global*, that the turmoil of the 1970s was among the great economic crises of the twentieth century; the chapters that follow almost entirely ignore disco. But Stein's thunder, if not always fair, is not un-useful. Her rage fuels her. The first half of her book provides a highly original illumination of how the American Century collapsed.

The focus is on the idiosyncrasies of the postwar hegemony that preceded it. Stein doesn't quote Henry Luce's famous 1941 "American Century" essay (too cultural, perhaps), but she might have. Luce imagined America as "the dynamic center of ever-widening spheres of enterprise, America as the training center of the skillful servants of mankind, America as the Good Samaritan, really believing again that it is more blessed to give than to receive"; he concluded that "out of these elements surely can be fashioned a vision of the 20th Century to which we can and will devote ourselves in joy and gladness and vigor and enthusiasm." By Stein's judgment such bushwa was not driven by some neoimperial will to power. Just the opposite. By her reading, the "Great Compression" of 1947 through 1972 was an Eden in which productivity skyrocketed, unemployment and inflation plummeted, America bestrode the economic universe like a colossus and prosperity was broadly shared as it never had been before—and all of it was squandered by elites whose will to national power was not nearly strong enough.

Stein's rage fuels a highly original illumination of how the American Century collapsed.

Stein's proposition is that, besotted by hubris that the good times would never end, and also by perceived cold war strategic imperatives, America gifted the rest of the industrial world with unprecedented trade concessions: unfettered access to the US market, a blind eye to others' protectionism and a willful indifference to the possibility that these policies could render American industry vulnerable (indeed, we even encouraged Europe to form an economic cartel that "allowed Western Europeans to trade more with each other, even though this trade came at the expense of America's own commerce"). We worked a similar generosity on one strategic corner of the industrializing world. Japan's per capita GDP in 1950, Stein points out, was about the same as ours was in 1850. We helped that country catch up: the president of Toyota called the Korean War "Toyota's salvation" because of the thousand trucks a month the US military began ordering. In 1953 "the National Security Council urged the entry of Japanese goods to the United States to halt 'economic deterioration and falling living standards' in Japan that 'create fertile ground for Communist subversion.'" Walter Heller, chair of the Council of Economic Advisers during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, said one of the advantages of the 1964 income tax cut was that it would make it easier for Americans to buy Japanese products.

Heller and his ilk assumed that America would be the kingdom and the power and the glory forever, amen. ("No one imagined" and "never imagined" are phrases that redound across *Pivotal Decade*'s early chapters.) "After the war," Stein reports, "the United States contained 60 percent of all the capital stock of the advanced capitalist countries and produced 60 percent of all output. Even in the 1970s, these figures were still 50 percent." But by 1971 the United States was running a trade deficit for the first time since 1893. How did a country with just about half the wealth in the world end up buying more stuff from abroad than it sold? Our elites let it happen on purpose. They gave away the store.

Through tax incentives companies were encouraged to transfer technology to foreign competitors. The Trade Expansion Act of 1962 let them build factories in Europe, which they loved to do not merely for the cheaper labor and reduced costs for transport to European customers but also because it eased the charge that they were foreign interlopers. The law made it easy for the president simply to strike wide classes of import tariffs from the books, which he was eager to do; what Stein calls the "new European mercantilism" one old-fashioned New Deal economist described as "the administration's holy cause." A 1964 innovation let US components assembled abroad re-enter the United States taxed only on the value added in assembly. "Even Americans who predicted economic harm," she says, "supported unilateral trade reductions." Numbers tell the story: "U.S. companies increased their investment in foreign countries at a rate 50 percent faster than the investment in the United States"; from "1962 to 1972 the payments deficit grew from $3.6 to $11.2 billion"; between

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[*Tip:* You'll be in stitches when Evangelia Kingsley sings Marc Blitzstein's "Fraught" – a parody on torch songs that Blitzstein called his "Coel Poward number." Slyly seditious, it begins in the style of a Cole Porter ballad, then tips on its ear to become a hilarious rant by a voracious woman who is, well, "Fraught."]

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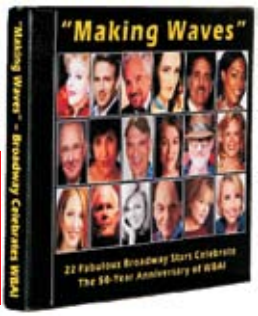

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1967 and 1970, imports from Japan doubled and America's trade deficit from Japan was $3 billion—in 1971 it was $8.5 billion.

The best and the brightest—Republicans, Democrats, even those self-identifying as "liberal"—fashioned transnational capitalists as the heroes of freedom's story. The State Department's George Ball, a former lobbyist for the European Economic Community, when meeting with American textile manufacturers, used to love to show off the European labels of his suit, shirt and tie. In this Stein sees the harbinger of Democratic working-class sellouts to come: "His delight…left him no space to contemplate the situation of thousands of Southern agricultural workers who needed textile jobs."

Stein shows that by the 1970s wage earners weren't really all that affluent.

Meanwhile, manufacturing real wages fell 82 cents an hour from 1965 through 1969.

Some worried. The *Wall Street Journal*, for example, complained about all the "unsophisticated electronics" being marketed from Taiwan for gullible US teenagers. Midwestern Congressmen—dreaded isolationists!—excoriated the State Department for selling out American manufacturers. (They "were right," recollected a State Department trade specialist.) Nixon and Kissinger did not care; they had a cold war to fight. "Working as an economist for Kissinger," said the man whose job it was to make sure the National Security Council paid attention to domestic industrial interests, was comparable to "being in charge of the military for the Pope." Asked why he was indifferent to the tariff walls Japan was erecting to protect its computer industry, President Nixon said Japan must be given "more than our trade interest, strictly construed, would require"; later he said "computers were not politically important." Neither, it soon would arrive, were American factories—or at least it was assumed the factories could take care of themselves.

What about the factory workers? Here is the core of the rage that burns in Stein. Democratic intellectuals wrote books like *The Affluent Society* and *The Challenge of Abundance*. Stein's most crucial contribution to our understanding of the era is demonstrating that by the 1970s wage earners actually weren't all that affluent. Unemployment in 1969 was 3.9 percent. But among the 96.1 percent, one in five workers was unemployed for some period of the year, and one-third of those for almost four months. "In 1970," Stein points out, "government figures indicated that 30 percent of the nation's working-class families were living in what was actually poverty."

She uncovers what the Bureau of Labor Standards recorded as a typical budget recommended for the average working family. It is a meager measure of affluence. That average American family could buy a new refrigerator after seventeen years and a TV after ten. It could have a toaster, which was supposed to last for thirty-three years. It could buy a two-year-old car that it should keep in working order for another four years. "The husband will take his wife to the movies once every three months and…will go to the movies alone once a year. A total of two dollars and fifty four cents per person per year is allowed for admission to all other events.… The budget allows nothing whatever for savings."

That was in 1970. Why was Archie in his bunker? Because, according to Judith Stein, financially his life rather sucked, and he was reasonably terrified it might soon suck worse. And all this was before the October 1973 oil shock set America's economic hegemony on its ear.

The oil shock rightfully hangs over all these books. Stein explains better than most just how traumatic and blindsiding it was. At the beginning of the Great Compression, America did not use all that much oil. What we used mostly came from domestic sources. US consumption tripled by 1972. Japan's went up 137-fold. For the first time, oil in large part came from elsewhere. Saudi Arabia and its neighbors produced 1.1 million barrels a day in 1948 and 18.2 million barrels by 1972, and for the first time America imported 6.2 million more barrels a day than it consumed; but the strategic consequences were not much apparent, since Western countries controlled the oilfields. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, formed in the 1960s, was more "a band of rivals," Stein notes, than a "band of brothers"; its attempt to punish the United States for its support of Israel in the 1967 war was a thoroughgoing failure.

Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi was the first to point a new way forward: in 1969 he overthrew the Libyan monarchy; then he jacked up the price for Occidental Petroleum to operate in his country. The ace held by such Middle Eastern potentates was their authoritarianism: they could slow their oil production at will, indifferent to the near-term economic consequences for their sparse populations. "People who have lived without oil for 5,000 years," Qaddafi paradigmatically declared, "can live without it again for a few years in order to attain their legitimate rights."

Nikita Khrushchev had called the strategic city of Berlin the West's "testicles": all he had to do was squeeze it to get what he wanted. Now it was the likes of Colonel Qaddafi who had the West by the balls. Nixon and Kissinger, who could see the world only in cold war terms, reacted with slack inanity to the rising cartel. Kissinger bellowed to his aides, "Don't talk to me about barrels of oil. They might as well be bottles of Coca-Cola. I don't understand!" The president puffed up his chest and cited the example of Iranian Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh, whom the CIA overthrew in 1953, when Nixon was vice president. "I think the responsible Arab leaders will see to it that if they continue to up the price," the president warned at a September 5, 1973, press conference, and to "expropriate, without fair compensation, the inevitable result is that they will lose their markets."

Inevitable, Mr. President? On the occasion of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the OPEC producers banned the sale of petroleum to the United States, effecting what one historian called "the greatest nonviolent transfer of wealth in human history." Henry Kissinger once famously cried as the bombs fell on North Vietnam, "I can't believe a fourth-rate power…doesn't have a breaking point!" In 1972 the Dow Jones Industrial Average was 1,000. Then came the Revenge of the Fourth-Rate Powers. By 1975, Stein relates, when the Dow was closer to 600 and helicopters were ingloriously rescuing Americans from the roof of the embassy in Saigon, "Kuwait shoved aside British Petroleum and Gulf [Oil], taking over the Kuwait Oil Company, founded in 1934. Compensation? The two companies asked for $2 billion, and received $50 million."

Other nations that produced strategic commodities followed suit. "By the middle of the 1970s," Stein records, "at least 75 percent of the holdings of U.S. raw materials corporations located in Third World nations had been nationalized." Stein calls it the "trade unionism of the developing world." The consequences shattered the

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globe. The section on lowly Jamaica telling America precisely how high it had to jump to access its bauxite—essential to the manufacture of aluminum—makes for the book's most riveting archival reconstruction.

The abstraction Marxists call "capital" got straight to work imagining new strategies and stories to re-establish its hegemony. The subtitle of Stein's book promises an account of how that happened. In the first half of the book we learn where the factories went. The other half of the book, however, has nothing to say on the finance. Her rage gets in the way of the story she claims she wants to tell and takes it in another direction, one bearing the futile geriatric aroma of baby boomer ideological scores being settled.

With *Stayin' Alive* Jefferson Cowie has become the bard of the 1970s' awful existential lag.

The villains are 1960s-style New Politics liberals, Democrats who offered no compelling way out of the morass. Worse than ignoring the collapse of the industrial working class, she finds, they welcomed it. Postmaterialists, inspired by New Left concerns about "the extra-economic goals of 'self-direction, self-understanding, creativity, and human independence,'" they saw in the decline of industrialism "new possibilities for 'non-productive' or social tasks to help the needy and improve the quality of life." Obsessed with the moral enormity of the Vietnam War, increasingly disposed to thinking of it as the "inevitable result of basic flaws of the United States—racism, militarism, and capitalism," they learned to ignore more prosaic, but imminently looming flaws: the economic social contract was under strain. How bad did it get? Well, she unearths a stunningly condescending remark from Murray Kempton, an older liberal, to be sure, but one who by the 1970s was very much on the New Politics bandwagon: "the AFL-CIO has lived happily in a society which, more lavishly than any in history, has managed the care and feeding of incompetent white people."

I'm pretty sure Versailles under Louis XIV was worse. Kempton was not alone in being driven a little hysterical by the 1960s. But now it is forty years later, and one hopes tempers have cooled. Stein's has not, and so her account of the Democrats' failed responses to the political and economic crises of the 1970s ends up being not false but not particularly useful, burying what is sharp and original under what is derivative, reductionist and sour.

The hero of her story is Hubert Humphrey, which is fascinating: Humphrey's trashing at the hands of aesthetically derisive chroniclers like Hunter S. Thompson and the sheer unfocused rage that antiwar activists subjected him to on the campaign trail in 1968 represented 1960s radicalism at its most childish and uncouth. Stein reconsiders Humphrey as a prophet without honor, struggling mightily and unceasingly through the 1970s to craft legislative solutions to the burning of America's industrial base while other Democrats fiddled with identity politics and post-Watergate procedural reformism. In cooler hands such a reconsideration of Humphrey might have made for a worthy historiographic intervention. Stein is too hepped up to make it work.

Her account of the 1972 presidential campaign begins with the unobjectionable insight that "Democrats felt free to fight for control of what they believed was the nation's governing party, cast out temporarily in 1968 by the public disgust of Lyndon Johnson's war in Vietnam," but it ends up seeming as if it could have been written by Fox News Democrat Lanny Davis or a neoconservative like Jeane Kirkpatrick, both of whom told much the same story long, long ago. It is full of cheap shots. ("The New Deal, once a badge of honor, was now a hurdle to be transcended.") You wouldn't know from this book that HHH had had his bite at the apple in 1968 running precisely the sort of economically nationalist, AFL-CIO–centered campaign Stein thinks was the obvious play for 1972. He lost. Her conclusion that McGovern's victory over Humphrey for the nomination was "not especially potent" because the campaign "cherry-picked the states it would contest" is more sour grapes than sound historical analysis. Most crucially, her account is jumbled by a lack of contextual empathy for a historical actor's partial view of his or her times.

Stein's account of the Democrats from 1976 onward is especially ungenerous. Again, the animating insight is sound. "The critical moments occurred in 1979 and 1980," she concludes, "when a Democratic president chose in vain to battle inflation, not unemployment, and promote a balanced budget, not growth." (Democrats never, ever get political credit for dousing inflation at the risk of unemployment: man, do you ever want to bash Barack Obama's economic team over the head with that particular truism!) She argues as if there were some magic bullet Democrats should have pursued instead, and that this course should have been self-evident to them. She assumes that it would be neither Keynesian nor neoliberal, but the specifics of the play this Monday morning quarterback would have called never quite come into focus. "Generals were fighting the last war," she writes. Well, yes: they were only human, doing the best they could with the limited understanding available to them at the time. Instead, with an ahistorical gracelessness, Stein seeks to court-martial them.

So how and why did the United States trade factories for finance in the 1970s? The young scholars collected in *The Shock of the Global* anthology have many more answers. Louis Hyman, a 2007 Harvard history PhD who landed at McKinsey & Co., gives us a groundbreaking account of how a new financial instrument called the "mortgage-backed security" emerged, irony of ironies, from the embers of the urban riots of the 1960s. It was intended as a safe way for industrial unions to invest their pension funds but ended up as the turbocharged vehicle of choice for go-go hot-money investment banks seeking to "evade geographic and state boundary restrictions on lending."

Vernie Oliveiro, a graduate student in the same department, uncovers how Democratic mandarins like George Ball (who pronounced before the International Chamber of Commerce in 1967 that national boundaries only "impede the fulfillment of the world corporation's full potential as the best means yet devised for using world resources") and *Fortune* magazine (whose managing editor the next year heralded the rise of the "Business Internationale") were joined in the yeoman work of propagating the notion that divesting themselves of American factories actually improved the lot of American workers. (From the archives of a business museum in Delaware, for example, Oliveiro excavated "Your Job Is Bigger Than You Think," a pamphlet 3M distributed to its employees explaining that unless they were "able to operate in those countries as a *local* business employing *local* people and giving *local* service, not as a foreign"—well, that local people in America would somehow lose their jobs.) Oliveiro's dissertation promises to be an outstanding addition to

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the crucial story of how big business organized to crush liberalism in the 1970s. Daniel Sargent, an assistant professor at the University of California, Berkeley, narrates how, by the time of the Carter administration, the very notion of Congress legislating in the national economic interest—instead of an abstract "global economy"—was beginning to seem anathema.

America was being remade in the 1970s. But what these younger scholars much more effectively grasp was that this transformation—including the remaking of the country from a headquarters of factories to a headquarters for finance—cannot be understood as an exclusively or even predominantly economic process. It was also a cultural one. I was especially fascinated by Matthew Connelly's contribution to *The Shock of the Global*, an article about the 1970s obsession with predicting the future. The trend, he points out, joined evangelical Christians, environmental doomsayers, "Team B" neocons predicting imminent Soviet military dominance and even, yes, the psychics hired by the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency. "The different forms it assumed," he argues convincingly, "cannot easily be disaggregated." What they shared was a sense of apocalypse.

What induced this shared dread? The experience of inflation, for one thing. Inflation was supposed to be a nugatory consideration in the brave new world of the Great Compression. The wizardly Keynesian economists who were the era's priests were fond of scything remarks. Here's Paul Samuelson in the 1950s: "By the proper choice of monetary and fiscal policy we as the artists, mixing the colors of our palette, can have the capital formation and rate of current consumption that we desire." If prices started going up, that means you had painted the economy in hues a bit too hot; cool it down, and the inflation would go away. Too cool, just add some heat. But then came something called "stagflation": the coexistence of a high inflation and stagnant unemployment. Stagflation was supposed to have been impossible, yet there it was. Its emergence, Samuelson sheepishly admitted, amounted to "a sad reflection on my generation of economists that we're not the Merlins that can solve the problem." It deflated not just economists' but an entire nation's ego. As Connelly points out, "Of all economic phenomena, inflation is particularly pernicious in stoking anxiety about the future. It forces people to readjust their expectations continuously, since their wages are worth less every day, while the goods they need cost more all the time."

The continuous readjustment of expectations—*downward*: that was a key experience of the 1970s. An expectation can be wrenchingly hard to readjust because there is an awful existential lag involved. As historians go, Jefferson Cowie is that awful existential lag's bard.

Cowie is a younger historian at Cornell, whose book *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor* received a prize for the best book in labor history in 2000. In 2008, with Nick Salvatore, he published a major essay in *International Labor and Working Class History*, which argued that "while liberals of the seventies and eighties waited for a return to what they regarded as the normality of the New Deal order, they were actually living in the final days of what Paul Krugman later called the 'interregnum between Gilded Ages.'"

I've struggled so long trying to figure out a way to summarize Cowie's new book, *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class*, that I started worrying I was losing my critical mojo. I've summarized dozens of books in my literary career; it's become rather second nature. Some books, however, are not easy to encapsulate. Often that means the author doesn't know what he or she is doing. Other times, though—much more rarely—the summary is difficult because the work is so fresh, fertile and real that the only thing it resembles is itself. I can't summarize my favorite movie, Jacques Tati's *Play Time*. You just have to see it. And I can't summarize *Stayin' Alive*. You just have to read it. It establishes its author as one our most commanding interpreters of recent American experience. It corrals all the generational energies coursing through the centrifuge of post–baby boomer '70s scholarship and churns them into the first compelling, coherent statement I've read of what happened in the '70s.

Laura Kalman expresses well the consequences for a liberalism that formed its operative assumptions in an age of plenty and could not but run into tragedy when it carried forward those assumptions into an era of scarcity. "Inflation made desegregation more costly," she points out. "Democrats had assumed that a pluralistic, interest group–oriented liberalism would benefit all society." Instead of sharing in a cornucopia of abundance, working-class whites and minorities ended up competing "for a very limited piece of pie instead of joining forces to fight for a larger slice." Stein quotes a Nixon economic adviser explaining why that administration decided to repeal a 7 percent investment tax credit designed by the Kennedy/Johnson White House to encourage companies to expand their factories: "There were more important things at this juncture in history to do…than to make even more rapid a rate of growth that is already very rapid or making larger a gross national product in 1975 or 1980 which already in any case is going to be a staggering size." The American Century was supposed to be a century; no one thought it would last only thirty-two years. Cowie's accomplishment is to convey what this epic cheat felt like from the inside. The fact that he is able to do so from the perspective of working people does no less than revivify

Stele

Vertigo, itself in air — there are
small hands — also in pattern

becoming scattered — the stiff wind
shifts the axes, chances — this other world

that almost visits — an empty glass
standing in — the light like crystal

I cut myself on air — open air, the kind
that finds its difference here — sharing

across the fields — its walking song

COLE SWENSEN

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the moribund genre of labor history.

Here is a taste. It is August 1974, the month of Nixon's resignation. An old-fashioned labor-liberal refuses to cross a picket line at his workplace, single-handedly shutting down production for a month. "It's a matter of principle for me," he says. "I simply refuse to work with anybody who takes money to do a union man's job while that man is on strike.... I could no more go into a building and work with scabs than I could play handball in church." His co-workers were liberals too, but of a newer type. "I don't think he has any support anywhere," one of them says. "It was very noble-sounding, but not, uh, wise." The holdout is a man named Carroll O'Connor, and the workplace is the set of *All in the Family* at CBS studios, where he plays Archie Bunker.

"Ironically," Cowie discovers, "the real-life labor dispute at CBS prevented O'Connor from taping a four-part set of shows centered on another strike—this one down at Archie's plant.... The four installments of *All in the Family*, finally made once the strike was settled, centered on Archie's union going on strike over wages and cost-of-living adjustments—exactly the reason that the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) was striking CBS." As usual, Archie is scripted by the show's creators—liberals too, of that newer type—into being the butt of the joke. "At the end of the made-for-TV dispute—during the entirety of which Archie could not grasp the difference between a flat raise and a cost-of-living adjustment—Archie boasts of winning a 15 percent raise," Cowie writes. "Let's have a toast to the good old US of A, where everybody gets his slice of the pie. All you gotta do is do your work, and in the end ya get it," Archie declares as he is humiliated by the laugh track. The joke—conveyed by the long-haired son-in-law, Mike—is that when the settlement is adjusted for inflation, the bamboozled lunks at Archie's plant make 5 percent less than before. "Archie, and his union (seemingly incapable of bargaining for real wage gains), are the fools as the show ends with everyone knowing that Archie really lost the strike—everyone, that is, except Archie."

In hindsight the joke was on all of us. As Cowie explains, "In a 1976 episode, Archie, brooding over the Democrat Jimmy Carter's White House victory, may not have had the last laugh when he warned that liberals would not be so happy when Ronald Reagan won in 1980. The prophesy was supposed to be an attempt at absurdly dark humor." ■

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Shirley Henderson, Zoe Kazan and Michelle Williams (from left) in *Meek's Cutoff*

The Magic Mountain

by STUART KLAWANS

Years ago, when I served on its selection committee, I failed to justify the New York Film Festival to a culture-desk reporter for the *New York Times*. He honestly could not see the point of an event where so few deals were made, promotional campaigns launched or Oscar contenders handicapped. I tried to persuade him, but could not, that a festival may also serve a critical function, which is how the New York Film Festival distinguishes itself. It declares that some two dozen new pictures, out of thousands made around the world, are worth particular discussion this year. Agree with its choices or disagree, but the New York Film Festival stands for something.

The fact that this something is often remote from commercial interests—not necessarily inimical to them but on their margins—can admittedly make New York's event seem like the Magic Mountain of film festivals. A self-enclosed society of febrile cinephiles gathers, away from the world, to breathe only thin, pure air (that's the house aesthetic) while gorging on meal after meal of dread, suffering and bad conscience (the preferred subject matter). I recognize myself, forever convalescent, in this caricature. But I also know that the 2010 New York Film Festival offered wonder, heartbreak, illumination, laughter, sumptuous sets, gorgeous costumes, flamboyant acting, lavish storytelling—and that was just in Raúl Ruiz's *Mysteries of Lisbon*.

I'll get to that picture—and to Charles Ferguson's *Inside Job*, which filled the festival's regular slot for a rousing, muck-raking documentary, and is the selection that *Nation* readers especially want to see. First, though, a few notes on the films that most needed critical endorsement: the ones American audiences might not get to see if the festival didn't help introduce them.

Perhaps the finest selection this year was Lee Chang-dong's *Poetry*, a drama about a smiling, modest, hard-working older woman in a provincial Korean city and the lout of a teenage grandson she's been raising single-handedly. Her story begins with back-to-back announcements of bad news: she has begun to show symptoms of Alzheimer's disease, and her grandson is part of a high school gang that has committed a terrible crime, which the boys' fathers are conspiring to cover up. What can she do, this conventionally self-deprecating woman with the genteel old clothes, now that she's losing her words and a group of men are enforcing silence? Her intuitive solution, which gradually takes on the character of an act of resistance, is to enroll in a poetry writing class. Lee's moving yet utterly unsentimental script is flawless; his direction is assured. But best of all is the acting by Yoon Jeong-hee, whose performance equals any you will see in Ozu or Naruse.

Among the other outstanding narratives on the schedule, films by Kelly Reichardt and Aleksei Fedorchenko testified to the festival's abiding love for movies where

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made-up characters pass through real though myth-laden landscapes.

Meek's Cutoff is the latest of Reichardt's studies of Americans adrift in the West and is her first period drama. Set in 1845, it follows the dangerous social dynamics within a small wagon train that has gotten lost in the Oregon Territory and is growing desperately short of water. As the party doggedly travels right to left across the classically formatted frame, going through grasslands and desert and rocky hills, power shifts back and forth among a braggart frontier guide (Bruce Greenwood), an increasingly self-assertive woman in the party (Michelle Williams) and a captive Indian (Rod Rondeaux), who may or may not be leading the group to its doom. You might be tempted to call *Meek's Cutoff* an exercise in feminist, multiculturalist piety if these two latter characters had any clear idea of what they were doing, or an overriding motive other than self-preservation; but they don't, and you won't.

Fedorchenko's *Silent Souls* was for me the revelation of this year's festival. Ostensibly based on a Russian novel (no trace of which seems to exist), supposedly written by Aist Sergeyev about the disappearing folkways of the Merja (who do exist, but perhaps not like this), *Silent Souls* is an exceptionally strange, exceptionally beautiful road trip movie, set along the rivers, bridges and dying towns of central Russia. The key character, Tanya, is a corpse lying in the back seat of a little car. She is being driven to a Merja-style cremation, to be performed by her husband (a powerful older man to whom she was not so happily married) and by the film's narrator, an amateur folklorist (coincidentally named Aist) who seems to have shared an unconsummated crush with Tanya. Wry, melancholy, nostalgic and inventive, *Silent Souls* is fabulism with mud under its fingernails.

Landscape and fabulism come together incomparably in Apichatpong Weerasethakul's *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*, which won the top award at Cannes this year and so, like many of its predecessors, made its way into the New York Film Festival. An ailing farm owner in Thailand's rural northeast, his sister-in-law and nephew who are visiting from the city, the ghost of his wife and the spirit of his long-absent son (now transformed into a hairy creature with glowing red eyes) are among the characters in this droll and deadpan foray back and forth between the daylight and nocturnal worlds, the limits of the house and the vastness of the jungle, life as we know it now and life as it might have been (and still might be) in other times. Once upon a time during the festival, a colleague asked what I was looking for. I replied, "A film that I don't yet know how to watch." Weerasethakul has given it to me, and I'm as grateful as when I was first handed a mango.

As much as the festival favors the contemplative, the personal and the indirect, it also makes room for films that address the public realm head-on. Here the 2010 festival was especially strong, with two large-scale, complementary films about the fortunes of leftist movements over the decades. These were Olivier Assayas's journalistic fiction *Carlos*, about the career of the international terrorist Ilich Ramírez Sánchez, and Andrei Ujica's compilation documentary *The Autobiography of Nicolae Ceausescu*, shown as a sidebar event.

Monumental and intricately detailed, yet as seemingly spontaneous as if its crew had parachuted into a war zone, *Carlos* in its full version is nearly five and a half hours long, making it suitable only for festivals, cable television and roadshow presentations. A normal-length cut is going into wider release, but I would urge you to make time for the complete experience, since it recounts twenty years of intrigues and violence, takes place in more than a dozen countries and is performed in English, French, Spanish, German, Arabic, Hungarian, Russian and (I think) a little Farsi. As a thriller, *Carlos* follows the *Touch of Evil* principle: it sets itself off with a car bomb and then never stops moving (though some episodes, notably the 1975 kidnapping of the OPEC oil ministers, are more protracted than others). As a character study, the film lives off the swagger of its lead actor, the amazing Édgar Ramírez, who catches just the right note of self-regard in every bullying speech about revolutionary self-abnegation. As a political exposé, *Carlos* draws on copious research and its own cool head as it lays bare the various agendas—duplicitous, venal, opportunistic—that this self-styled freedom fighter pursued without ever advancing the Palestinians a single millimeter toward statehood.

If *Carlos*, with its exploration of the byways of Soviet-sponsored terror, is in part a fictionalized look at the covert world of Communism in the last decades of the cold war, then an overt and yet even more fictional Communism is the subject of *The Autobiography of Nicolae Ceausescu*, a film pieced together almost entirely from Romania's public spectacles. Here, in government footage, is Ceausescu's life as his propaganda machine portrayed it, from 1965 to 1989: an endless series of pa-

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rades, festivals, folk dances, inspection tours, state visits and triumphant speeches, where he and his wife were invariably greeted with ovations, warm congratulations from foreign leaders and heaps of flowers borne by uniformed children. Sometimes the archives yield a glimpse of genuine valor (as when you see Ceausescu refuse to join in the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia), and sometimes a sign of discord momentarily breaks through the surface. On the whole, though, this is three hours of official delirium. If it seems a bit long, think of how the real thing felt to the Romanians.

Because the New York Film Festival has been the entry point into America for the Romanian New Wave, anticipation ran high this year for another two Romanian selections. *Tuesday, After Christmas* by Radu Muntean proved to be the better of them: a slow-paced (needless to say) but ultimately scorching drama of adultery and the breakup of a marriage, with a trio of superb performances. Muntean's buildup leads to an explosion; whereas in *Aurora*, by Cristi Puiu, there is only a fizzle. Puiu, of course, is the author of a masterpiece, *The Death of Mr. Lazarescu*; and so it was dispiriting to see him (as the lead actor) fall into the cliché of the affectless loser, who shuffles robotically from one drab, wordless, needlessly prolonged scene to another until violence erupts. Well, doesn't it always?

I come to some of the disappointments of the festival. *Post Mortem*, by Pablo Larraín (director of *Tony Manero*), is the story of a shuffling, affectless loser in Chile for whom the inevitable violence is the 1973 coup. He becomes complicit, because in film festivals it is an article of faith that he must. (Hangdog men who masturbate in their dingy bedrooms always go over to fascism.) *Robinson in Ruins*, a film essay by Patrick Keiller, pretty much cleared the theater at the screening I attended. Though it had a lot to say about the traces left on England's landscape by centuries of property enclosures and political resistance, it said these things in no particular order, with no effort at argument and at numbing length, within the irritatingly flimsy pretense of a fictional framework. Still, I believe the festival had the responsibility to show it—just as it had the responsibility to show Jean-Luc Godard's *Film Socialisme*, which combines two of my favorite words in its title but will never make it onto my must-see list. Mashing up a ship-of-fools setting with scenes set in a Resistance-cell garage, footage from *The Battleship Potemkin* and ruminations on the history of Palestine, *Film Socialisme* is marvelous to look at but pointless to decipher. Godard's dazzling collage technique now does the thinking for him—or, rather, relieves him of the responsibility to think at all.

Among the masters who did not disappoint this year were Abbas Kiarostami with *Certified Copy*—a much-abused film, which I hope to defend when it's released—and Raúl Ruiz with *Mysteries of Lisbon*. The latter movie, based on Camilo Castelo Branco's mid-nineteenth-century novel, was another of the festival's marathon selections (with a running time of four and a half hours) but rewarded every minute with its tales upon tales of desperate countesses, disguised priests, nouveaux riches upstarts and wandering orphans. I can't say the film is as radically brilliant as Manoel de Oliveira's version of the same author's *Doomed Love*, nor does it reach the impossible heights of Ruiz's version of *Time Regained*. (A problem of the source material: Castelo Branco was no Proust.) All this one does is carry you into a Neverland of cinematic bliss.

Hell, in the festival, was left for Charles Ferguson's brief against the financial services industry, *Inside Job*, which wants to carry you into the street. Its thesis is simple: the people who ran Wall Street, and whom Ferguson is so rude as to name, knew perfectly well before 2008 that they were fleecing millions of people, endangering their own companies and threatening to crash the world economy. They just didn't care, so long as they could cash out first. The not-so-simple job of the movie is to make this case with impeccable clarity, which Ferguson does, using expert testimony (from the likes of Nouriel Roubini and George Soros), archival footage of the culprits, crisp graphics and the occasional dash of gallows humor. ("Has Larry Summers ever expressed remorse?" asks Ferguson, off-camera, to Barney Frank, who shoots back, "I don't take confessions.") I wish the film had been able to provide more blood sport in interviews with Wall Street figures (most of whom refused to sit for the camera). I also could have done without the crude shot of a revolving door (to accompany a discussion of the collusion between Wall Street and government) and the concluding flyover of the Statue of Liberty. (Since the problem is global in scale, as Ferguson takes pains to show, wouldn't it have been better to end on an international symbol—the red flag, for example?) But these are quibbles. *Inside Job* really is the movie of the decade, unfortunately. It's also the movie that brought the 2010 New York Film Festival down from the Magic Mountain and into the fray. ■

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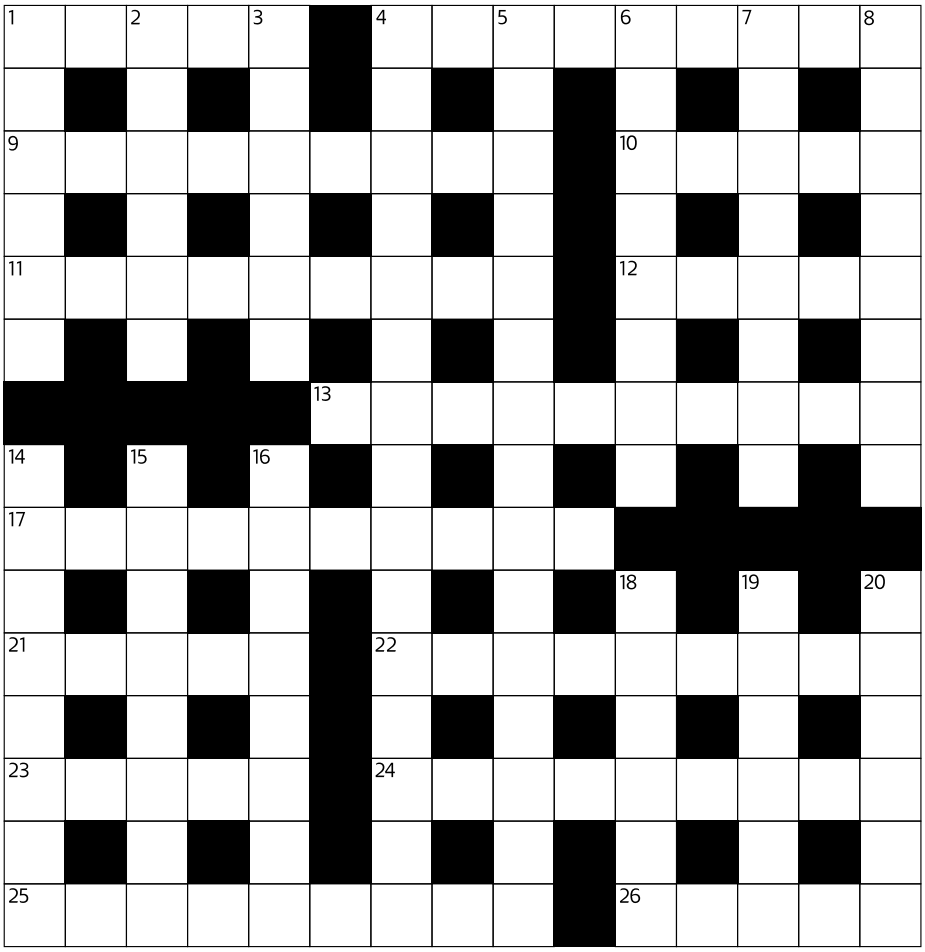
Puzzle No. 1606

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Steal out of it with as little as possible. (5)

4 Might it hang around you unfortunately? (9)

9 Patterned rug of felt, but you might not remember it so. (9)

10 It might be proportionate with it, or a form of it. (5)

11 Given this, there's evasion of what some dogs do to track. (3-6)

12 It might take pluck to make it, unless it's part of the speech. (5)

13 Sort of unplugged after a point, but got close. (8,2)

17 It might reveal the record to look certain. (10)

21 Jonson asked her to drink to him, after a fashion. (5)

22 It doesn't mean one which is often passed—descriptive of certain marriages. (6,3)

23 Carries from set to set in a better way. (5)

24 Is it clear it's formerly a single set price? (9)

25 What Shiva did, reputedly. (9)

26 Is prolific with sides, by the sound of it. (5)

DOWN

1 Manufacturing rifles shouldn't get out, possibly. (6)

2 They might be fastened with a tie or snap, but poorly so. (6)

3 The people who collect taxes, but not yours or mine? (6)

4 People with money, as they say, might be ineffectual toys. (8,7)

5 The typical Englishman? Something to beat, with the doctor about on the case of a famous detective. (7,8)

6 Part of the engine connected with the choke? (8)

7 After going to the middle of the circle, any progress must be. (8)

8 Dentures might, but they're not permanent measures. (8)

14 A mugwump is beyond his intellect, by definition. (8)

15 Is around comparatively tardy, but shuts off. (8)

16 One of those agents tidying things up in McLean serves to make it obvious. (8)

18 Instant importance? (6)

19 Iron, for example, starting in the sixties or seventies. (3,3)

20 Brushes off a chance to make some money on a bet? (6)

This puzzle originally appeared in the November 8, 1975, issue.

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1605

		C	O	M	M	O	N	S	E	N	S	E		
	S		N		A		E		A		I		M	
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